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UMAR KHAYYÁM

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BY

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ابر آمد و باز بر سر سبزه کویست
 بی باد ارغوان نمی باید زیست *
 امروز که این سبزه تماشا کم است
 تا سبزه خاک ما تماشا کم کیست *
 (عمر خیام)

Come, love, sit on the grass—'T will not be long
 Ere grass grows out of our dust, yours and mine.

'UMAR KHAYYÁM.

TO

PLUTENANT COLONEL IFTIKHAR UL MULK PRINCE
HAJI MUHAMMAD

HAMIDULLAH KHAN SAHIB FAHADUR BAY
(ALIC), C.S.I.

AS A HUMBLE AND AFFECTIONATE TRIBUTE
IN ADMIRATION OF HIS MANY AMIABLE
VIRTUES

AND AS A GRATITUDITIOUS
THE KINDNESS AND SYMPATHY SHOWN BY HIM
IN ENCOURAGING THE LITERARY EFFORTS
OF

HIS MOST LOVING AND DEVOTED SERVANT
THE AUTHOR

110PM 1921

PREFACE

ALMOST all the modern writers without exception, are at variance with one another as to the number and authenticity of the quatrains by Khayyám. Every one has played his own tune. The subject has had enough criticism without a positive decision. In Professor Browne's words, 'it is, of course, always possible that an ancient and authoritative manuscript may some day be discovered in one of the unexplored libraries of Asia'. Under the circumstances, one has no other alternative than to rely on the copies hitherto discovered. The context of the quatrains and Khayyám's distinctive style may also, to a considerable extent, contribute to form a rational opinion about them. Otherwise they become almost mythical. Bearing in view all these facts, I have had to rely on Professor Shibli's Shari'u'l-'Ajam and M. 'Abdu'r-Razzáq's Nizamu'l-Mulk, the Rub'áiyát compiled by M. Muhammad Shafi'u'd-Din Khan, and the well-known work by Mr Heron Allen.

I acknowledge my great indebtedness to the late Shamsu'l-'Ulamá, Professor Shibli Nu'maní, Maulavi 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, Islamic Historian to the Bhopal

Government, Khwaja Ghulámu's-Saqalain. Zia'u'l-'Ulúm Muftí Muḥammad Anwáru'l-Ḥaqq. M.A., Munshí Fázil, Director of Public Instruction, Bhopal, for the help derived from their valuable works Sharí'u-l-'Ajam, Nizámu'l-Mulk, Falsafa-i-Zindagí, Maárif, Aligarh, and Haqáyíq-i-Islám respectively.

I have also to thank my friend Maulána 'Abdu'r-Razzáq for his kind permission to reproduce the picture of 'Umar Khayyám.

I thank the Rev. Canon Edward Sell, D.D., sincerely for his valuable suggestions and corrections made in the manuscripts and for the pains he has taken in proof-reading.

Last, but not least of all, I thank the Madras School Book and Literature Society for the valuable aid given to this work.

M. A. VARESI.

BHOPAL,
1921.

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INTRODUCTION

THE turmoils of life, the struggle for existence and the ever-increasing responsibilities of man occasioned by the growing needs of a highly materialistic world, are strains from which human mind naturally desires to seek relaxation, however momentary it may be. Tendencies differ. We seek diversion in picnics, balls and a variety of amusements congenial to our taste. Everything, however, has a limit. In the long run, the so-called recreations impart little satisfaction and no consolation. When the glamour of youthful passions begins to wane, the natural tendency of thoughtful individuals draws them towards something nobler and higher. Fresh vistas of thoughts present themselves in their sombre, radiant majesty. Life unfolds itself in its many coloured hues before the insatiable mind. Spontaneous questions arise in a variety of forms. The importance of personality and self, the aims and objects of life, life itself, and kindred weighty problems, each in their turn attract and rule the mind in rapid succession. Knotty questions arise. Link to link is added and yet the chain is ever incomplete. The mind is puzzled and begins to wander like stray cattle. Wherefrom, how, why

and whereto does the pilgrimage begin and end? Speculation develops itself with the psychological progress of man. His aesthetic nature is stirred up. At the threshold, however, there are ever sudden revelations of a definite conclusion. Secrets again become known. Untold truths and veiled mysteries are brought to light. Man thus enters into a different sphere of the beaten line of thought and act. The physical is superseded by the spiritual, and, consolation at last streams forth from the lintel of altogether a different edifice. 'Umar Khayyám, the philosopher-astronomer-poet of Persia comes to help. His quatrains tell us a different tale. Their music captures us for its own, and casts around us a curious sort of narcotic spell. We are ushered into a different world. They present to our vision in melancholy strains the colossal importance of life and the universe. One is led to realize one's isolated but all triumphant position. The burden of our new find is crushing but we are not crushed. Why? Because self is our own, provided we make it our own. The question of self dominates the whole world. Everything having a force in it bears testimony to the importance of self. In animal life in the vegetable world, in minerals, in mountains, in everything that we see, the preponderating element is that of self. The consciousness of self is a reality. 'The survival of the fittest', the ancient motto 'know thyself', the Hindu ethics of

Dharma in the deliverance from ignorance and absorption in knowledge, the essence of Christianity in the submersion of love, the teaching of Buddha in the widening of love, the Islamic beauty of passive but cheerful resignation to *Allah*, the demon of self-aggrandisement and the subjugation of others from a materialistic standpoint, all these prove without a shadow of doubt the transcendentalism of self. The whole universe seems to be stamped with self. Self seems to be imprinted on everything we look at or perceive by the senses. Khayyam is also bitterly conscious of self. He also takes one of the noblest views about it and, as a poet, perhaps the best. He requests the soul to realize its importance. He scolds it for being fettered and for having made the earth its abode. He reminds it that its eyrie is the Empyrean, and so it is its paramount duty, as a fine and translucent thing, to soar to Heaven immediately after its attainment of freedom from the mortal clay, the body. But to the attainment of self, self-sacrifice is the indispensable watchword. Self-sacrifice and self-abnegation are, in other words the key for attaining the self. It is next to impracticable to estimate the importance of self, without sacrificing what is nearer and dearer in this phenomenal world. In the absence of this, the annihilation of self or soul is sure and certain. Khayyam does not confine his views on self to any particular denomination or religion, but gives the sum and

substance, or the gist of it, which may be equally applied to any form of religion whatever. It fits in—to every case and circumstance, ethical, religious or materialistic. Evolution is its chief goal. The essence of self consists in truth, or in mischief, or partly in both as circumstances permit. The Flood of Noah, the destruction of many a historical town, the Christ on the Cross and his ascension, the persecutions suffered by Muḥammad and his adherents at the hands of the infidels of Mecca, the long list of heinous atrocities and cold-blooded murders of the heroes of Karbala by the accursed Yazíd, are all illustrations of the spirit of self. The story of Ram Chandra, his exile, his renunciation of the crown, simply to honour his father's promise to his step-mother, the misdoings of Ravana and his subsequent fall and end, are all symbolic reflections on self. Every great personality, every powerful existence, is the representation of truth or mischief, and subsequently an undeniable illustration of self. But this self, at last, surrenders itself either to the Great Omnipotence or to the Devil, as the case may be, classified by the Zorastrians either as the god of virtue or the demon of vice. According to Khayyám and to the essence of the revealed religions, the Master of both is the One Great God. And this fact causes the sufferers in this short life to welcome pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, with almost equal ecstasy as they come directly from Him, the One

and because the Immortal and the Permanent is He and He only. In the Eternal God only Khayyám finds his chief and truest source of joy, sustenance and everlasting help. His thorough reliance upon and absorption in the Deity is prominent. He is fully conscious of Him and his words are a guiding code to others. The very facts of his life prove his contempt of worldly riches and possessions. He desires to attain to the highest ideal of life. He discards everything material. He has craved for what is substantial and abiding. He has sipped the nectar of knowledge drop by drop, with a life-long devotion, and has given out the essence of his experience in his melodious notes to God's creation. He has received the divine hospitality with grateful hands, and proved with just appreciation his gratitude by handing over the fruits of his wisdom and knowledge to posterity. His is an intellectual knowledge of the universe and its Creator. And in spite of this knowledge he alludes to his perfect ignorance. He has done his best to derive his unalloyed happiness and blissful pleasure from the Merciful Almighty. He has done his best to be with Him as far as he has been able to be. The bounties of nature have not been wasted in vain. He has proved himself to be a worthy son of his country and a universal friend. His example is a noble one.

Some may, however, object to the intellectual

pleasure taken by him in his wit and humour, as demonstrated by his quatrains on the subject. But it may be said that he is never irreverent and that it is a noble task for a poet. It rather sheds a streak of light on the relation and communion that existed between him as a philosopher-poet and God. His love of the Deity is undeniable. Take his expressions technically and you will enjoy their mystic charms. He, however, serves those as well who want to read him from a material standpoint.

After every storm there is a calm. All boisterous wit and humour is occasionally followed by tranquillity of mind. To a literary and intellectual élite in this mood, sober, dignified and pessimistic thoughts frequently present themselves on a broader and more pathetic scale. A solitary and agreeable corner lends to the enrapturing charms and effect of grave contemplation. The instability of the world is a subject which has drawn the attention of almost every individual in this life. But an inquisitive mind begins to ponder on this painful but interesting problem more carefully and with absorbed interest. Accordingly, *Khayyám* was no exception to it. He has, along with other poets, studied the minutest details of the subject and done full justice to it in a variety of forms, afresh and anew. The very clay of which earthen pots are made has attracted his attention in a peculiarly grotesque manner. Every particle of it has deep,

our own ! It is only the noble deeds that survive. The world is a place where mortality and nothingness are rampant. It is a place where a series of lamentable events are a wholesale and wholesome lesson, and where there is a regular change eminently regardless of age, beauty or power.

When a man far advanced in his age, taking a rational and comprehensive view of things, conscious of a monotonous environment and of his prejudiced contemporaries, reflects on the uncertainty of worldly phenomena, he is somehow or other inclined to sink his sorrows in some entertainment or other. Lack of intellectual entertainments disappoint him. Indulgence in recreations conducive to his physical or mental detriment are repulsive to him. At last, he sinks his sorrows in the contemplation of the Divine. But it is not the natural disposition of each and every scholar to become a saint. If he is a man of purely worldly concerns, he becomes a wine bibber. And under all circumstances he looks upon wine as his ideal friend. Be he a man of the world, or a saint, he finds wine and love the medium of his poetical expressions. The latter, like his many countrymen, was the case with Khayyam. His fervour for wine in his quatrains has led many to believe that he did enjoy the bitter but delightful draught. The majority of thinkers, however, conversant with Persian poets and their manners of thought, confine his poetical writings to divine

approaches only. The pleasure drawn from and the advantages of wine are undeniable, but its mischief is far greater. Applying it to the divine love, it is all virtue. Who can deny the fact that this sacred pleasure supersedes everything else. Once being placed in the way of intellectual ecstasy, and carrying on the course for an indefinite period in life, one keeps within the arena and attains the real ideal of the present, and of the life after death. Oh! the ravishing charms and effect of divine contemplation and absorption in Him in a solitary but delightful place by the brink of a river or a running brook and green fields, is a pleasure, as Khayyám shows, which is unattainable by any mere worldly ruler. It reminds one of the Rishis and saints of Ancient India, leading a calm and contented life of unabated happiness in the green jungles on the summit of a mountain, in constant harmony with nature in its full glory, and with the Great Power engulfing all the worlds both seen and unseen. It is the binding duty of every individual to fill up his measure with scarlet wine before his own measure of life is filled up. It is a duty never to enter into the tavern, i.e. a temple, a church or a mosque, without making ablutions with wine, i.e. without purifying one's heart with the pure love of God. Khayyám, however, advises his admirers and readers to sip it drop by drop with ecstasy and relish and in solitude. Thus the poet alludes to the fact that

devotion to God in fixed hours, along with the discharge of one's worldly duties, is better than to quit the world altogether and resort to a jungle, a monastery or a secluded corner. And why so? Because wife, children, eating, drinking and the discharges of worldly duties are in themselves an act of devotion to God, if carried on temperately and with reasonable propriety.

To those who actually delight in wine or something other than God's love, the literal meaning of Khayyām's quatrains will give joy, as they need little explanation. They are however, full of touching pathos in that light particularly, and Khayyām exhorts such people to take it without fail, for one day they will die, will never come back to life again, and will sleep under the earth *ad infinitum* without a friend and a sweetheart. His thoughts compel honest thinking people of all denominations to be in fullest sympathy with him. It seems as if he applies a master-key to the heart of man to unlock the emotional aspects of human nature. He, therefore, advises them to enjoy the present day, trusting as little as possible to the future.

The contemplation of the divine and the mastery of different arts and sciences may help one to realize the importance of many complex problems, but the real nature of things and the different phenomena and the mystery of life itself are still a sealed book. The precision of mathematics is an acknowledged

fact. The deterministic character of science is well known. The tremendous strides taken by philosophy in the exposition of complex problems are remarkably appreciable. But it is still a question of fact whether any one has yet been able to gauge the real situation and discover to the full the exact mystery of things as they are. Only a rudimentary knowledge of the fundamentals is now to be had. Khayyám's erudition and his unsurpassed mastery over the different sciences of his age is a conclusive fact ; but his life-long experience has forced him to admit the ignorance of man. His scientific researches and the depth of his philosophical and theological knowledge have proved of no avail. On them he has pondered and pondered over and over again, but, like his many preceding and succeeding philosophers, the real mystery has remained as unknown as ever. The truth of his sad statements is borne out by the fact that, in spite of the wonderful evolution the world has undergone, there has been little change in the real situation. Science has made considerable contributions to the invention of materials for human luxury, or for the destruction of civilization ; but the knotty problems of soul and life have not yet been solved. Different ages and countries have produced spiritual leaders and prophets, but even the latter have not been able to go beyond the formulation of a code of ethics, or of rules for the purification of mind and soul from physical vices and temptations.

Whence man comes from how and why he lives here and whither he goes back, are still unsolved secrets and seem to be unknowable. What is man, what was the object of his coming into the world and going back are explained by certain religions in a few paradoxical expressions, but the secret the real mystery is still a mystery. Thousands of years have passed away since the creation of the world but the knotty problems are as fresh to day as they were eons ago. The sum and substance of the whole creation has been found to lie in the will of God in the command of God. But the reason for its being so has never received a satisfactory answer. Was this all an experimental recreation of God? The very question is blasphemous and is untenable. The heathen doctrine in its attempt to convert One Eternal God into many gods has flourished in the world but none of the gods has ever come forward to explain the sceptical nature of the complex problems or solve the mysteries referred to. They have remained as impenetrable as ever. What has after all been arrived at is the existence of one Prime Force, One Great Cause One All Powerful and All-Pervading Mover. This is Kṛiṣṇām's religion also and he has emphatically laid stress on the fact *that he never externally or internally multiplied the Godhead.* He was a thorough unitarian and in unitarianism only lies whatever there is available of true knowledge. Beyond this the mutual contest

of different religions is a shadowing darkness of ignorance.

Later on when one is led to believe that knowledge in its fullness is unattainable by man, he may think that whatever is disclosed to man, is through His grace only. When theory is put into practice, the question, whether man is capable of doing things himself with full freedom, or is fully subject to the divine control, causes one to step into the delicate and complex problem of free-will and pre-destination. It occasionally happens that a man wants to do a certain thing, but he feels as if something is standing in his way and eventually he does not do it. If the intended act is a social, religious or a legal offence, it is explained that it was the grace of God that spared the man from its commission. If it is a good act, it is said that, either Satan, or negligence of the man himself, debarred him from doing it. Some, however, of Khayyám's sect would attribute the whole thing whether good or bad to God only. But these excuses may be objected to by many. It may, however, be explained that good emanates from God and the responsibility of evil is shifted to man endowed with the light of conscience. It may again be contended that God is the Creator of both good and evil, and consequently, God is responsible for both good and evil, done or neglected by man. But this excuse of the performance or

non performance of an act cannot be entertained merely because man has been given restricted freedom as well, and he would be held accountable for his actions. In the absence of this the human and divine laws become a farce. Khayyam, like many, attributes the whole responsibility to God. He contends that he did just as he wished, in conformity with the principle laid down by religion that not a particle can move without the command of God. He pleads that his actions were in perfect harmony with his own nature for the composition of which God was alone responsible. He was what God made him to be. But at the same time experience, and the other religious principle, laid down in this connection, show the full responsibility of man. Who can deny the fact that not a particle can move without God's command. But the consideration of the fact that man will be taken to task for his omissions and commissions, on the other hand, proves the freedom of man to a certain extent. Here one is forced to arrive at the conclusion that man should strive to his utmost to perform his duty and leave the rest to God.

The problem as enunciated by Khayyam is the gist of mysticism or the Sufistic creed. The distinguishing feature of the Muslim law and jurisprudence, as compared with Sufism lies in the fact that it is the fountainhead of rules and regulations for the guidance of man in this life. It is a full

exposition in connection with the affairs of the world and the life after death. It promises to its believers rewards and endless bliss for good acts done in conformity with it, and provides punishment to be inflicted in this world and at the same time in the next for those who make a breach of the law. The mystic doctrines mean the sincerest contemplation of God, one's fullest absorption in the Deity, self-less love for Him, with everything else as illusion. Şúfiism¹ lies in the spirit and not in the letter. The factor common to both is sincerity and faith and indisputed resignation to God's will. Şúfiism lays no stress on forms and appearances. It emphatically deals with good motives and intentions as they are. The law is rigidly particular of the superficial aspect of man. To an orthodox theologian, the personal appearance of a Muslim and his actions should be in strictest correspondence with the injunctions of law, whilst to a Şúfí, the mind, the heart, and the soul should be in resplendent harmony with the purest love of God. Şúfiism aims at the realization of the Deity and tolerates the transgressions against law, if the heart beats in perfect unison with God. The law, or Sharí'at, is the compendium of both the inward and the outward, though particularly of the outward, but

¹ For fuller details on the subject, see the learned works of the Rev. Canon Edward Sell, D.D., *Şúfiism* and the *Faith of Islám*, (C.L.S., Madras).

Sufism is specially of the inward Love compassion, forbearance, toleration, forgiveness and other softening traits of character are the noble objects of Sufism. Law is an embodiment of all these things, but inflicts punishment on those who commit a breach of it with whatever motives they do it. Law is substantive and mysticism is passive reliance on God. A long beard, a long cloak a turban and a dignified appearance, in conformity with the injunctions of the law, may deeply impress at the first sight, an orthodox scholar but to a Sufi the impressive outward form may be a farce. He looks to the kernel and not to the shell. To him a compassionate heart, sincere love of God and kindness to His creatures irrespective of religion, is the highest attribute. A touch with a wet dog may defile the clothes of a religious advocate, but to a Sufi, the nourishment the service and care of a dying or miserable dog, as if it was a human being, is a work of incomparable excellence. Why so? Simply because a dog is the creation of God and everything having a life deserves the sympathy and attention of a human being. In short the law administers things both worldly and spiritual and Sufism is purely the creed of the spiritual

In order to understand the esoteric teaching of Sufistic poetry, it is necessary to remember that perceptive sense is the traveller, the knowledge of God the goal, the doctrines of this ascent or upward

progress is the tariqat, or the road. The extinction of self is necessary before any progress can be made on that road. A Şúfí poet writes :—

Plant one foot upon the neck of self,
The other in thy friend's domain ;
In everything this presence see,
For other vision is in vain.

According to Khayyám, a belief in the unity is supposed to cover a multitude of sins :—

Khayyám strings not the fair pearls of good deeds,
Nor sweeps from off his soul sin's noisome weeds,
Nevertheless he humbly hopes for grace,
Seeing that One as two he nev'r misreads.

The final goal of all Şúfí aspirations is absorption in God, and this ' Umar Khayyám seems to teach in :—

O Soul ! when on the Loved one's sweets to feed
You lose your self, yet find your self indeed,
And when you drink off His entrancing cup,
You hasten your escape from quick and dead.¹

Thus Shamas-i-Tabriz says :—

Soul and body transcending I live in the soul of my Loved One anew.²

In short, Khayyám's philosophy, in sad and mournful strains, connotes the aim and object of life as pure and serene pleasure, happiness, kindness to others, indifference to pomp or show, contentment

¹ These verses are quoted from the *Faith of Islām*.

² A *Literary History of Persia*, p. 524, 1906 edition.

and freedom from being under an obligation to the proud rich, it inculcates the leading of a simple life with higher and nobler aspirations of soul, indifference to the cares and worries for daily bread, for this God supplies, and a persistent endeavour in the search of truth. Whether the man is an orthodox theologian or a Sufi, hypocrisy is most emphatically denounced by 'Umar. Sincerity and fidelity is consistent with truth. And truth he finds only in God and God alone. Everything else is illusory. In a word the utilitarianism of unitarianism is 'Umar Khayyám's chief goal.

MAS'UD 'ALI VARLISI

BHOPAL, CENTRAL INDIA,

Ramadán 28 A H 1330 (June 6 A D 1921)



'UMAR KHAYYÁM

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF SKETCH OF 'UMAR KHAYYÁM'S LIFE

Khayyám was the pre-eminent doctor, astronomer and philosopher of his time and the epigrammatic poet of universal and imperishable fame. Of him Persia will always be proud. 'Umar was his name, Ghayásu'd-Din (shelter of faith) his title; Abú'l-Fatah (father of success) his kunniat (patronymic) and Khayyám his takhallus (poetical *nom-de-plume*).

We learn from authentic sources that the distinguished title of Ghayásu'd-Din was conferred on him by his nation. This proves that he was an acknowledged Imam of his time, because Ghayásu'd-Din and Muhyiyu'd-Din are titles which specially fall to the enviable lot of men of unsurpassed erudition alone.

His kunniat does not bear a literal meaning, because he always remained a bachelor; the significance of the name Abú'l-Fatah is that his great achievements had raised him to the position of a father of knowledge.

Some writers suggest that the name of Khayyám's father was Ibráhím, but it was really 'Uthmán, and the truth of this assertion is corroborated by Hakím Khaqání, Khayyám's own nephew. Hakím Khaqání was not only Khayyám's favourite pupil but was also bred and brought up by him. His testimony is direct and perfectly reliable.

Hakím Khaqání, in his *Mathnawí-i-Tuhfatu'l-'Iráqáin*, says :—

بگریخته ام ز دیو خزان * در سایهٔ عمر ابن عثمان

I have escaped from the clutches of the evil tempter and taken refuge in the protection of 'Umar, son of 'Uthmán.

and he concludes thus :—

بامن به یتیم داری آن مرد * آن کرد که عم به مصطفی کرد

He treated me, an orphan, with the kindness and affection extended to the Prophet Muḥammad by his uncle.

Again Khaqání alludes to his grandfather, the father of Khayyám, that is, 'Uthmán :—'Jaulaha nizadam az sue jad', i.e. 'Through my grandfather I am a weaver.'¹

¹ This industry has always played an important part throughout the Muslim world, and many spiritual leaders of undisputed reputation have resorted to it. In India, however, some professions have

Hakim Afzalu'd-Din Khaqani was 'Ali's son, the latter a famous brother of Khayyam Aguin 'Uthman, 'Ali and 'Umar are names of the same genre and according to the Muslim custom of giving names to children, are likely to be the names of brothers

It is therefore to be inferred that Khaqani is quite reliable. So the Arab maxim has it — *Sahibu'l-baiti adra bi ma fiha*, or, 'one who belongs to a house must of course be better informed of things in that house than outsiders'

assumed the garb of castes and that of a weaver's is no exception to it. Unfortunately respectable professions adopted by Muhammadan leaders and Imams of great fame in days gone by, are now looked upon in India with contempt a fact indicative of the community's arrogant lack of good taste and moral backwardness. In ancient India with the advent of the Aryans the caste system came into vogue according to the different professions which certain groups or classes of people took up. When the Muhammadans came in many of the Aryans embraced Islam but with it the idea of the caste system did not die away. It is very probable that the idea of treating the weaver's profession in a contemptuous manner and looking upon the caste as low and down trodden may be merely the shadow of the past Hindu civilization. It would be beyond the scope of the present subject to discuss at length the caste system. I would therefore confine myself to the statement that in the palmy days of Hindu civilization this classification was brought into existence merely to apportion different works to different people for religious political and physical reasons irrespective of any social importance. And the so called distinction began to creep in with the degeneration of Hindu civilization.

Khayyám's father, 'Uthmán, was a weaver by profession. It is said that he changed it afterwards for that of a tent-vendor. It is uncertain whether he was a tent-repairer, tent-vendor or tent-maker; but at least this much is known that, in his last days, he had dealings in tents, and this was the sole reason why the Persians called him Khayyámí. Among the Orientals, every man prefers to bring up his children in his own profession; we find that none of 'Uthmán's sons took up his father's profession.

'Umar's poetical *nom-de-plume* is Khayyám. Some writers overstrain the meaning of this word in trying to prove that Khayyám's profession was tent-making. Khayyám did not follow the profession of his father. His adoption of such a *nom-de-plumz* may be attributed to his extreme humility or to his desire to immortalize his father's name. It might also have been adopted to symbolically suggest that he patched tents of noble and sublime thoughts, tastefully decorated with impressive graceful speech to shelter the seekers after truth. He himself alludes to this fact in the first line of the following quatrain:—

خيام كه خيمه هائى حكمت ميروخت
 در كوره غم فداك و ناگاه بسوخت *
 مقرض اجل عذاب عمرش به بريد
 دلال امل بر ايگانش بفروخت *

Khayyam who stitched the tents of science
Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly
burned.

The shears of fate have cut the tent ropes of his life

And the Broker of Hope has sold him for
nothing!

(FITZGERALD.)

No subject has been more assiduously discussed than the questions, when and where was Khayyám born? In answering the question no two historians have agreed, so far as I have been able, after a diligent search, to discover. The distinguished scholar and statesmen of his time, Khwāja Nizām'u'l-Mulk, the famous Premier of Alp Arslan and Malik Sháh Saljuqí, in his *Dastur'u'l-Yozara*, says that Khayyám was born in Nishapur and that he was brought up and educated there. The statement is thoroughly reliable in view of his close intimacy with Khayyám. No one has yet been able to give the exact date and the year of Khayyám's birth. From investigation, however, it appears that he was born about the year A.H. 410 (A.D. 1019). Khwāja Nizām'u'l-Mulk describing at some length his student life at Nishápur says,—

'Hakim 'Umar Khayyam and also the wicked son of Sabbah were new arrivals. In that assembly they were of my age, most highly gifted with a masculine intellect and judgment endowed with

a keen and most distinguished and broad outlook of the world and my close associates.' The Khwája speaks of him as of his own age, and he himself was born in A.H. 408 (A.D. 1017), and when he joined Imám Muwaffiq's institution he was twenty-six years old. Boys, with a difference of one or two years in their age, are generally spoken of as of the same age.

There is no authentic record in existence in which we can find an account of the early days of Khayyám. But, from scattered accounts, it is known that 'Umar Khayyám studied theology, Hadíth and Islámic Jurisprudence in Imám Muwaffiq's institution, a place then highly renowned for these studies. He was twenty-four years of age at that time. Of his first eighteen years, during which he must have kept himself assiduously occupied with his preliminary training, there is little known.

In A.H. 434 (A.D. 1042) Khayyám became a pupil of Imám Muwaffiq. For four years he was the class fellow of Khwája Nizámu'l-Mulk and Hasán bin Sabbáh. When these three bade farewell to their *Alma Mater*, at the request of the ill-fated Hasán bin Sabbáh, it was solemnly agreed upon between them, that whoever attained to a high position or gained wealth should share his resources equally with the others. FitzGerald writes to the following effect about it. 'This Nizámu'l-Mulk

in his *Wasīyat* (or *Testament*), which he wrote and left as a memorial for future statesmen relates the following¹ —

‘One of the greatest of the wise men of *Khurasan* was the Imam Muwaffiq of Nishapur, a man highly honoured and revered (may God rejoice his soul), his illustrious years exceeded eighty five, and it was the universal belief that every boy, who read the Qur'an or studied the Traditions (*Ahadith*) in his presence, would assuredly attain to honour and happiness. For this cause did my father send me from Tus to Nishapur with 'Abdu's Samad, the Doctor of Law, that I might employ myself in study and learning under the guidance of that illustrious teacher. Towards me he ever turned an eye of favour and kindness, and, as his pupil, I felt for him extreme affection and devotion, so that I passed four years in his service. When I first came there I found two other pupils of mine own age newly arrived, Hakim 'Umar *Khayyam* and the ill-fated Bin Sabbah. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit and the highest natural powers, and we three formed a close friendship together. When the Imam rose from his lectures, they used to join me and we repeated to each other the lessons we had heard. Now 'Umar was a native of Nishapur, while Hasan bin Sabbah's father was one 'Ali,

¹ See *Calcutta Review* No. 69 for a quotation from Mirkhund's *History of the Assassins*.

a man of austere life and practice, but heretical in his creed and doctrine.

One day Ḥasan said to me and to Khayyám: "It is a universal belief that the pupils of the Imám Muwaffiq will attain to fortune. Now, if we all do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then shall be our mutual pledge and bond?" We answered, "Be it what you please." "Well," he said, "let us make a vow, that to whomsoever the fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself." "Be it so," we both replied, and on these terms we mutually pledged our words. Years rolled on, and I went from Khurásán to Transoxiana, and wandered to Ghazní and Kábul; and when I returned I was invested with office and rose to be administrator of affairs during the Sultánate of Sultán 'Alp Arslam.'¹

He goes on to state that years passed by, and both of his school friends found him out, and came and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the school-day vow. The Vizier was generous and kept his word. Ḥasan demanded a place in the Government, which the Sultán granted at the Vizier's request; but, discontented with a gradual rise, he plunged into the maze of intrigue of an oriental Court, and, failing in a base attempt to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and fell. After

¹ On this episode see Professor Browne, *Literary History of the Persians*, vol. ii, p. 253.

many mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the Isma'ilians, a party of fanatics who had long murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong will. In A.D. 1090 he seized the castle of Alamút, in the province of Rudbár, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian sea, and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the Crusaders as the 'Old man of the Mountains,' and spread terror through the Muhammadan world. It is still disputed whether the word Assassin, which they have left in the language of Modern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the hashish or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian bhang), with which they maddened themselves to the sullen pitch of oriental desperation, or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quiet collegiate days at Nishápúr. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's dagger was Nizamu'l-Mulk himself, the old schoolboy friend.

The case of Nizamu'l-Mulk, who is known to the world as the great founder of the renowned Nizamiyah College of Baghdad, is analogous to that of the great historical figure of Moorish Spain, 'Alí bin 'Amír, surnamed al-Mansúr, or the victorious. Who could predict that twenty or twenty-two years after, the Khwája would be raised to the high office of the administrator of Alp Arslán Saljúqí, and on the

latter's death in A.H. 465, on the accession of Málik Sháh, would attain to greater powers and higher rank as the most powerful Vizier of his time? Who could forecast that Hasan bin Şabbáh would one day become the terror of his time and that the whole world would shudder at his outrages, which included also the assassination of his own benefactor and friend, Nizámu'l-Mulk? Likewise, no one could have dreamed that 'Umar Khayyám would hand on to posterity his round-going cup of the poetry of love, full of wine, the tempting odour of which would spread far and wide to distant lands, far beyond the seas and come down to the modern age.

Khayyám also in keeping with the agreement, called on his old class-fellow in Isfahán. The Khwája accorded him a generous reception, treating him with all possible courtesy and respect. The accounts of this memorable visit are to be found in several books, but nothing could be more trustworthy and full of interest than the description given by the Khwája himself. He writes thus: 'Hakím 'Umar Khayyám came to see me in the reign of Alp Arslán Saljúqí. I welcomed him with great respect and esteem and in fulfilment of our agreement, I asked him to take up the service of the Emperor, because he (Khayyám) was a man of profound learning and sterling worth and also in view of the fact that I was to share my position with him in accordance with our solemn pledge at Imám

Muwaffiq's institution. I told him that I would do my best to convince the Sultān of his wisdom and attainments, and the Sultān would in consequence repose his confidence in him (Khayyam) just as much as he did in me. "Your words show your nobility, generosity and high-mindedness," responded the Hakim, "otherwise, a man like myself, is not entitled to such great respect from a Vizier who rules from east to west. There is no doubt, all that you have said is true, and the honour you propose to do me is well within your power. As it is, I am under a heavy burden of obligation to you, and, if I undertake to thank you for it, it will ever remain an unaccomplished task. My only desire is to live and die your willing slave. But the position you suggest for me is not in keeping with the aim of my life. I dare not accept it, inasmuch as it would deprive me of the great boon in store for me. I simply crave your indulgence to let me pass my life in a secluded corner, distributing far and wide the benefits of my scientific researches and praying for your long life and prosperity." When Khayyam persistently refused the offer, I came to the conclusion that his speech was free from affectation and I therefore granted him an allowance of twelve ✓ hundred misqals¹ of gold annually from the Nishapur treasury '.

¹ One misqal equals about 4½ mashqs.

Khayyám afterwards returned home and seriously busied himself in specializing in different branches of knowledge, especially in his favourite subjects of astronomy and mathematics, in which lay his remarkable and unique distinction. He also devoted himself to research work. He produced standard works on algebra, trigonometry, mensuration and wrote a key to the important and difficult corollaries to geometry. A copy of this algebra is found in Leyden (Holland) library. The original Arabic text with its translation in French has been published in France by Woepcke (Paris 1851). His other works on mathematics are not in existence to-day. 'A work on the postulates of Euclid written by him is still extant in Leyden, and one on the mixture of metals is in Gotha, but neither of these has been published. A work at one time in Leyden, on the difficult problems of arithmetic (*Mushkilát-i-Hisáb*), is apparently lost. The algebra is considered by modern writers as one of the best works on the subject that appeared in the Arab-Persian ascendancy.'¹ He also wrote a series of works on astrology, but the names of these even are unknown to us.

His other works are : *Misánu'l-Hikám*, a treatise containing an enunciation of the principles of specific gravity and laying down directions to weigh

¹ See Monroe, *Cyclopaedia of Education*, vol. iv, p. 547.

ornaments without taking off the jewels studded in them; Lawazimü'l-Amkina, a work on physics. The four seasons and the different winds have been elaborately dealt with therein. A brief pamphlet on the reality of existence (fi'l-uqud) is preserved in manuscript in Berlin. A work on creation and the problems of pain and sorrow has been lately published in Egypt.

Besides his famous quatrains he has left to us few other verses in Persian and Arabic. He also tabulated a Zih (Astronomical Tables) and has gained fame (no less than in poetry) through his Jalál Máliksháhi Calendar, prepared by the orders of Málik Shah Saljúqi. It commences in A.H. 471 (A.D. 1079, March 15). 'His reformed calendar is more perfect than that which we even now use.'¹

'Umar Khayyám was not only a great philosopher, astrologer and a mathematician, but he was also a profound scholar of Muslim jurisprudence and Muslim theology. The independence of his views turned against him a section of the orthodox 'Ulamá. One day, he had a discussion with the renowned Muslim Jurist, Imám Ghazáli, the author of Kimiya-i-Saádat (Alchemy of Virtue). The discussion related to certain questions pertaining to the nature of the sky. Khayyám evaded the

¹ Macdonald, *Muslim Theology*, p. 198

question of Imám Ghazáli with his usual smile and referred to his (Khayyám's) work '*Aráisu'n-Nafisa*' in which, he said, he had treated the question at full length. This did not, however, satisfy the great jurist, who was bent on catching Khayyám in the meshes of his dialectic. At last Khayyám was forced to discuss the question and his speech lasted several hours. The Mu'adhdhin's call to the pre-afternoon prayer, brought his unfinished speech to a close, and Imám Ghazáli rose with the remark that 'the truth prevailed.'

Certain writers say that Khayyám knew Greek also (*vide Akhbáru'l-'Ulamá*). Greek philosophy was Khayyám's favourite subject and he used to give lectures on it to his pupils. His mastery over this subject leads us to the conclusion that he did know Greek and, perhaps, that is one of the reasons of his great superiority over his contemporaries, who had their source of knowledge in Arabic translations only.

Qádi 'Abdu'r-Rashíd bin Naṣr relates that one day he saw Khayyám in the public bath of Merv. He asked Khayyám to explain to him the meaning of Súratu'l-Má'uzatain¹ سورة معوذتین and the cause why certain words had been used therein repeatedly. Khayyám delivered a long sermon which removed

¹ This comprises the Súratu'l-Falaq (cxiii) and Súratu'n-Nás (cxiv).

all the doubts of the questioner. The Qadī says that in the course of his dialogue he quoted so many authorities with arguments that had it been put on record it would have made a beautiful pamphlet of great literary and theological value. Khayyam had no particular interest in the subject of Tafsīr¹. It may be imagined that, when he showed such a matchless mastery over subjects for which he had no special liking, his command over his own favourite subject of 'philosophy' must have been wonderful and quite unparalleled in his age.

The Arabs have raised the reciting of the Qur'an to the status of an art. Shahabul-Islam 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, Vizier of Sultān Sunjār, was always surrounded by men of letters and Qarīs² of great fame. Imam Abu'l Hasan Ghazālī, who knew the art of reciting the Qur'an perfectly well, was once present at a discussion in connection with the different ways in which the Qur'an can be recited. Khayyam also was there and as soon as the Vizier saw him he cried aloud, 'The Doctor of Arts has come'. The case was referred to Khayyam for final decision. Khayyam discussed the seven Qira'at (i.e. various readings) of the Qur'an³ and quoted numerous authorities, and, after a masterly disquisition, decided in favour of a certain form of recitation.

¹ Tafsīr means a commentary on the Qur'an.

² A Qarī is a Qur'an reciter.

³ See Sell *Ilmu & Tugwid* C I S Madras.

The Vizier at the close of Khayyám's lecture exclaimed: 'The masters of this art do not possess such vast information on the subject as Khayyám has: it is useless to expect much from Tárikhu'l-Hukamá تاریخ الحكماء the history by the learned men about it' (*vide* Shahr-zúrí).

Khayyám had a wonderfully reliable memory exacting the admiration of all around him. It is stated in the Tárikhu'l-Hukama of Shahr-zúrí that once, in Işfahán, a certain book attracted the attention of Khayyám. He liked it immensely and read it seven times. When he returned to Níshápúr, he dictated the whole book from memory. When the dictation was compared with the original, hardly any difference was found therein.

Khayyám was treated with great respect by the rulers of his time. Málik Sháh treated him as a friend. His son, Sanjar, used to give him a seat on the royal throne by his side. Shahr-zúrí, in his Tárikhu'l-Hukama, relates that no amicable relations existed between Sanjar and Khayyám. The cause, as described by him, was that Sanjar when heir-apparent was once suffering from small-pox. Khayyám was sent for to treat the patient. The Vizier asked Khayyám about the patient's condition. 'There are no good symptoms,' responded Khayyám. This frank and outspoken opinion was communicated to the heir-apparent. He was much

hurt at this and, throughout his life, bore a grudge against Khayyám. But we have it on the very best authority, that Sanjar always paid glowing tributes to Khayyám's accomplishments and great learning and always welcomed him with great honour and esteem. Shamsu'l-Mulk of Bukhara also accorded to Khayyám the same generous reception. His contemporaries envied Khayyám for the honours he received from the various Sultans and the great fame he thus gained.

The stream of learning that flowed from Greece to the Muhammadan countries brought with it astrology, which, though denounced by Islam as a black art, is studied by many Muslims as a science. The 'Abbasids and the Persian Sultans encouraged it and it became one of the indispensable sciences of the age. Khayyám had a mastery over astrology too and so was called an astrologer.

'Arudi Samarqandi says that once (A.H. 508) in full winter, the then Sultán sent word to Khwaja Buzurg Şadrü'd-Din Muhammad 'Alí Muzaffar, a noble of Merv, to kindly request Khayyám to suggest by means of astrology a suitable date, when it would neither snow nor rain, for him to go on a hunting excursion. Khayyám laboured for full two days and made a forecast that there would be no such trouble if the Sultán went out on a certain day. The Sultán had scarcely traversed a few miles when the sky became cloudy and the ground was

covered with snow. The Sultán's companions began to chaff Khayyám about this. The Sultán, however, did not choose to return, because Khayyám made him believe that the atmosphere, loaded as it was for the time being with clouds, would soon become bright and would remain so for the succeeding five days. It happened exactly as Khayyám had prophesied.¹

Arúzí Samarqandí further narrates thus: 'It was in A.H. 506 when Khawája Muẓaffar Asfarází and Khawája 'Umar Khayyám were both staying as the guests of Amír Abú Sa'id, a dignitary of the State. I called on them. In the course of conversation, Khayyám said that he would be buried in a place where trees would shower flowers twice a year. I was amazed at this forecast. At the same time it struck me that the words of a man of Khayyám's type and high character could not be passed over lightly. In A.H. 530, full twenty-four years after this conversation, I happened also to go to Nishápúr where I learnt that Khayyám had died long ago. I was his pupil and I then felt it incumbent on myself to visit the graveyard of Hírā and recite the Fátihah² on Khayyám's tomb. When I turned to the left corner of the graveyard, I witnessed a tomb just under the wall, covered with the flowers

¹ Nizúmí, *Chuhar Muqála* (ed. Ispahán), p. 130.

² The first Súra of the Qur'án.

of guava and peach trees It reminded me of the Imam's prophecy made in Balkh To me he was the best of men of letters, whom nobody had ever called I shed burning tears because he was my instructor and benefactor May God shower His choicest blessings on his soul '1

Khayyam's liberal and free views, as seen in his poetical writings, had created many enemies against him Moreover, many had grown envious of him, because he was a man of unsurpassed erudition and was highly revered by rulers and dignitaries The standard of his philosophical thoughts was too high for the common run of scholars to comprehend They gave a fatwa² that he was an atheist, an unbeliever and a materialist He was very much grieved at these unfounded charges and deeply regretted the lack of common sense and the prejudiced feelings of his antagonists It was the orthodox set who had poisoned the mind of the general public against him They conspired to gether to murder him in cold blood He had, therefore, to flee away from Persia to take refuge in the holy city of Mecca There he performed his Hajj and made a pilgrimage to the sacred tomb of the Prophet He returned by way of Baghdad where the people asked him to stay and lecture to students

¹ *Chahar Magala*

² A judicial decision.

After a time he went back to his native place where he found much trouble waiting for him.

Mr. Whinfield quotes an interesting passage from Qazwini's geographical work, *Atháru'l-Balád*, translated by Professor Ross in the *RASJ*, vol. 30, p. 355.

'Among the learned men of Níshápúr was 'Umar Khayyám. He was a man versed in all branches of philosophy, especially in mathematics. He lived in the reign of Málik Sháh the Seljúk, who gave him much money for the purchase of astronomical apparatus that he might make observations of the stars, but the Sultán died ere these observations had been carried out. They relate that 'Umar, while staying in a certain ribát (inn), noticed that the inhabitants complained of the abundance of the birds, whose pollutions defiled their clothes. He thereupon made a bird out of clay and placed it on the highest point of the building. After this, the birds kept away from this ribát. It is also related that one of the doctors of the law used to come daily before sunrise to read philosophy under him, but used to denounce him to the people. So 'Umar called to his house all the drummers and trumpeters, and when the doctor of the law came as usual for his lesson, 'Umar ordered the men to beat their drums and blow their trumpets, and thus collected round himself people from every quarter. He then addressed them, saying: "Men of Níshápúr,

here is your teacher. He comes every day at this hour to me, and studies science with me, but to you he speaks of me in the manner you know. If I am really as he says, then why does he come and study with me? and if not, why does he abuse his teacher? ” ”

Khayyam died in A.H. 517 (A.D. 1123) aged one hundred and seven years, and was buried in the graveyard of Nishapur. Hakim Khaqani, his nephew, wrote a very heart-rending elegy on his death. The events connected with Khayyam's death are very peculiar and unique. One day he was reading Hakim Abu 'Alī Sina's (Avicenna) *Kitābu'sh-Shifā* (book of healing). When he came to the passage dealing with oneness and excess,

و كثر وحدت، he put his gold toothpick on the page he was reading, and shut the book. He got up, made the legal ablutions (wadu') and said his prayers (namāz). Then he made his will and ate nothing. When the evening approached, he said his night prayers (namaz-i-khatam) and bent his head on the prayer carpet in obeisance to God and repeatedly exclaimed, 'O God, I endeavoured to find Thee as far as I could, pardon my sins in consideration of my earnest search of Thee' With these words he breathed his last and bade farewell for ever to the ungrateful world which had grown so offensive to him in his last days. Khayyam died with the idea

that the mysteries of life and death were unknowable and could never be solved. After his death, his mother saw him in a dream. She asked him how God had treated him after his death. *Khayyām* replied that the Merciful God pardoned him, for the following quatrain had evoked His compassion :—

ای سوخته سوخته سوختنی * وے آتش دوزخ ز تو افروختنی
تا کہ گوئی کہ برتر رحمت کن * حق را تو کنی بر رحمت آموختنی

O heart burnt ! heart burnt ! fit to be burnt !
And O thou to fan up the flames of hell,
How long wilt thou go on saying, 'Shower Thy
mercy on 'Umar,'
How (darest) thou teach God to be merciful !

To-day the great poet lies beneath the clay he has so frequently spoken of in his quatrains.

Compare FitzGerald :—

Oh, Thou who burn'st in heart for those who burn,
In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in turn ;
How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God !'
Why who art Thou to teach, and he to learn ?

Mr. Edward Heron-Allen has translated the quatrain thus :—

Oh, burnt one (born) of the burnt ! destined in turn
to burn,
And Oh, thou ! from whom the fires of Hell shall
blaze,
How long wilt thou keep saying, 'Have mercy
upon 'Umar !'
Wilt thou be a teacher of mercy to God ?

Prof. Cowell says : ' I am not sure, but I fancy this hard verse really is " O thou who art burned (in sorrow) for one burnt (in hell)—thyself being doomed to be burnt "'

In fact the first line of the quatrain is difficult and these three learned men have failed to convey the accurate meaning of the poet. It may also be translated thus ' O heart-burnt (like) tinder to be burnt,' but practically the translation I have given above is correct, and I have spared no pains to seek expert opinion on the matter.

His tomb has not been destroyed by the vicissitudes of time, but it lies in a miserable condition. It is frequently visited by pilgrims of the world who adore and love his writings and feel compassionately some spiritual connection with him. There is no epitaph but it is a place which that every one of the inhabitants of Nishapur knows. No flowers decorate the poor mound, as they did before, but a tear or two, sincerely offered by his admirers, who visit the grave, more than compensate the loss of flowers.

در مزار ما تربیان ہے چراغے بے گئے
 ہے پر پروانہ سوزد نے صدائے بلبلے *
 حشک گل افسردہ سبرہ شمع چپ دِلن اوداس
 حی دہر آیا علم گور شربیان دیکھکر *

On the grave of our poor self there is neither a
lamp (lighted) nor a rose (offered),

Neither the feather of a moth burns, nor (are
heard) the sweet notes of a nightingale.

The dried-up rose, the withered green, the silent
(i.e., extinguished) candle and the mournful head-
side,

This spectacle of the grave of the poor dead has
made the heart melt and weep. (Anon.)

CHAPTER II

KHAYYÁM AS A MATHEMATICIAN AND ASTRONOMER

THERE is nothing more trying for an author or an artist than constant care and worry for daily bread. It has nipped in the bud the rising aspirations of many a man of promise. It has led to the verge of suicide, maimed the intellect and lulled the ambitions of many a man of genius. The world has long after acknowledged their worth, shed bitter tears on their deaths and deeply regretted its lack of appreciation and hospitality to them when alive.

Khayyam, however, was a fortunate man so far as his livelihood was concerned. The liberal support of 1,200 misqals accorded to him by Khwájá Nizamu'l Mulk went a long way towards setting his mind at rest. He returned to his native place with a light heart, cheerful and contented. Devoting himself to scientific researches, he led a 'life of lettered leisure and philosophic retirement.' He devoted all his intellectual resources and acquisitions to the enriching of the scientific literature and the arts of Persia. A few years of glorious and successful labour at last produced a work of incomparable

excellence on algebra ' which at once gave him the foremost place among the mathematicians of his age.'¹ 'Umar Khayyám was noble-minded. His heart was susceptible to kindness. He could not easily forget his benefactor's magnanimity and he repaid it as best as he could. He had no worldly fortune. This work was his only priceless jewel. What else could he do except dedicate it, the fruit of his indefatigable energy, to his old and true comrade? As an author, this beginning was glorious and prosperous. Later on, he produced another work of importance on mensuration and cubes. Soon after, this was followed by a key to the solution of complex problems and complicated corollaries of geometry. Khurásán looked upon him as a reincarnation of Bú 'Alí Sína (Avicenna).²

As rain waters the dry and thirsty earth and the latter repays its gratitude in beautiful golden fields, so did Khayyám, in response to the Khwájá's philanthropic support, successfully endeavour to favour and enlighten the world with the fruit of his 'studious and contemplative years in the search of knowledge.' Besides this, in remembrance of his benefactor's noble kindness and sympathy, he dedicated and presented these works to the Khwájá, who was delighted with this invaluable asset to

¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xx, p. 100.

² *Vide Ganje Danish*, p. 523.

earning. The world is a wonderful phenomena of reciprocal obligations. Only the learned can form an equitable appreciation of the learned. The Khawaja did not content himself with his personal recognition of the merit of these works. This friend of the poor, a staunch advocate of learning and the very flower of courtesy, was inspired with the desire to raise Khayyám to the heights of honour and glory, such as befitted a man-of-letters. He spoke to Malik Shah about his friend's genius and scientific attainments. Malik Sháh had for a long time been anxious to bring about a thorough reform in the Persian calendar. He needed a man who could perform this work of colossal importance to the State. He was accordingly pleased to order the Premier to send for Khayyám at once from Nishápur. The royal mandate was immediately carried out, the Calendar Office was opened on a substantial scale for the carrying out of astronomical observations and Khayyám was installed as its head.

The improvement and the amendment rendered by this great astronomer in the calendar is in itself an interesting study and should have been dealt with elaborately by the historians. They have touched upon this subject very briefly. The only material available in this connection consists of certain articles in English, Turkish, Arabic, and Persian. Maulana 'Abdu'r-Razzáq, the well-known Indian writer in Urdu, has dealt with this subject

very clearly and at full length in his book, *Nizámu'l-Mulk*. In order to fully understand the subject, it is well to know what has been done in other nations and in other ages. This account is given in an appendix.

The throne of Yazde-Jurd passed on to the Muḥammadans. It was a principle of their administration not to interfere with the customs of the conquered races. Notwithstanding the fact that the Hijra year was prevalent, the old Persian era stood as it was. A period of revolution came in afterwards. The then Persian Government was dismembered and changed hands with the new masters from different families of Arabia and Persia. In A.H. 465 (A.D. 1073) the Empire fell to the lot of Sultán Jalálu'd-Dín Málik Sháh Saljúqí. In those days the Persian calendar was current in all the public offices. It was maintained by Málik Sháh himself. But it was not in its original condition. Málik Sháh, therefore, was very anxious to improve it. The revenue was realized on the basis of the solar year. The expenditure was incurred on the lunar system with the result that one day in A.H. 467 (A.D. 1075) not a single cowrie was left in the Imperial treasury.¹ This displeased Málik Sháh and he seriously made an unflinching determination that one special era should be introduced, both for

¹ *Taqwím-i-Abu'd-diyyá Turki*, A.H. 1310-11.

the collection of revenue and the disbursement of money. First of all, he consulted the distinguished Muslim scholars and the theologians of his time, and was at last compelled to introduce a *kabis* year, because the system then prevalent was likely to cause confusion after every twenty-three years. At last, seeing the necessity, he then ordered 'Umar *ḳḥayyām* to amend the Persian calendar in co-operation with the well-known astronomers of his time.

It is interesting to mention here the cause of Malik Shah's consultation with Muslim scholars on the question of the new calendar on the solar system. He wanted to know whether such a step would be permissible by the injunctions of the Muslim law. The theologians seem to have advised him that a new calendar was not unwarranted by Islam. Most probably he opened the Calendar Office with their sanction. This shows that the conversion of the lunar into a solar year for political and administrative reasons did not go against the spirit of the Muhammadan law. The Qur'ān'sh Sharif simply forbids the use of *Nasi*. It accordingly says:—

The sliding of months also is an additional blasphemy, owing to which the infidels go astray from the path of true religion. They hold a month in a certain year as legal and in another year as illegal. Their object in doing so is to make the four months as forbidden by divine authority (according to their

own ideas) as legal and valid by making calculations to their own desire. Their misdeeds have also been shown them in a good form and God does not guide those who commit themselves to blasphemy.¹

This verse may be annotated thus. In the pre-Islāmic days of Arab ignorance, the current era was that of Aamu'l-Fil (or year of the elephant). They added one month to every third year in order that the Hajj time might fall in one specified season so as not to disturb their commercial affairs. The party entrusted with the task used to declare beforehand the time of Nasī in the Hajj season. Muharram, Rajab, Dhi'l-Qa'da and Dhi'l-Hijja were those sacred months in which the Arabs regarded acts of plundering and murder as quite illegal and most sinful. This religious mandate was acted upon from the time of Abraham and Ishmael as the law of the land. So, if the month of Nasī happened to fall in any of the aforesaid months, the Khātib (preacher) used to proclaim that such a month was quite valid for their purposes. In this way, the lawful month was sometimes converted into an unlawful month. *This being the custom of the infidels*, God ordained it that the believers should give up the pre-Islāmic custom. Fakhru'd-Dīn, a great scholar well-known for his erudite writings, commenting on this verse, says that, the Arabs

¹ Sūratu't-Tauba (ix) para 5, Rukū' 4, Ayat 37.

thought that, in case they made use of the lunar year, their Hajj would sometimes fall in the hot season and sometimes in the winter, which they did not want for selfish reasons. The reason was that all the Arab tribes had to traverse a great distance for the Hajj pilgrimage, and they could not collect together at any other time than on the specified dates. The lunar system naturally stood in their way; they therefore preferred the solar system to it, introduced the Kabisa and added a month to every third year. The Hajj season sometimes occurred in the month of Muharram and sometimes in Safar. When the divine message was handed down to the Arabian Prophet, two things happened :—

1. An increase by the Arabs in the number of twelve fixed months, according to the Nasi system.
2. A discrepancy in the aforesaid four months.

The religious injunctions, communicated to the people by Abraham, were based on the lunar system, but the Arabs had given it up for temporal interests. It was thus, that God, the Omnipotent, pointed out to the believers that it was an additional act of blasphemy and He ordered them to give it up altogether.

The verse referred to does not prohibit the introduction of the solar system for worldly affairs, and there is no command in the Qur'an which goes against maintaining the social or political standard

of things. The learned theologians probably based their decision on this ground and empowered Málik Sháh to introduce the solar system. The Nasí system is still prevalent among the Egyptian Arabs (*Vide* Hamdu'lláh Mustúfí *Nuzhatu'l-Qulúb*, p. 50 ; Nofal Efendí of Tripoli. *Sunnajatu't-Tarab fí Sincenin* ; *Shuhurin Tafsír-i-Kabír*, vol. iv, pp. 446-7, ed. Egypt, A.H. 1308).

Khayyám made a good solution of this great problem and to meet the requirements of Málik Sháh, he organized an advisory committee of seven of the most learned picked men.¹

Their names are :—1. Abú Ḥatimu'l-Muzaffar Isfarázi. 2. Abú'l-Fataḥ 'Abdu'r-Raḥmán Khazáni. 3. Muḥammad Khazín. 4. Ḥakím Abú'l-'Abbás Lokri. 5. Maimún bin Najíb Wásífi. 6. Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Maamuri Baihaqi. 7. Abú'l-Fataḥ bin Kúshak.

This committee commenced its work on Saturday, Dhi'l-Ḥijja, A.H. 467 (A.D. 1074, July, 18).² It took them full three years to solve this great problem after an output of ingenuity, high-souled and persistent endeavour and ability which is as amazing as inspiring.

¹ See Shaikh Muḥammad 'Alí Tuhanáwí, *Kasháf-i-Iṣṭalāḥātu'l-Funun* (ed. Calcutta, p. 59) ; *Taqwím-i-Abwá'u'd-Díyá* (vol. iii, p. 231) ; *Kámil'l-Aṭḥír* (ed. Egypt, A.H. 1303) ; *Shahr-Zúri* (ms. in Professor Shibli's library).

² See Muḥammad Mukḥṭar Púsha, *At-Taufiqātu'l-Ilhámia*, p. 234.

The Jaláli Málík Sháhí or Seljúk era, for which 'Umar Khayyám's research was responsible, is based on the conclusion that the sun rotated yearly in 365 days, five hours and forty-nine seconds. He added one day to every leap year, and after the expiration of seven phases he added a day to the fifth year instead of adding one to the fourth year. In this way the difference between the solar and the lunar year disappeared after a full period of thirty-three years.

The problem being thus solved, Khayyám called the system the Jalali era after the name of Sulţán Jalálu'd-Din Málík Sháh. Gibbon says that it is 'a computation of time, which surpasses the Julian and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.'¹

Khayyám preserved the names of the old Persian years. The example of Lawahiq or Khamsa-i-Mustareqa was followed by an addition to the month of Isfandar (March). He also prepared a Zieh (astronomical and mathematical tables for architects and astronomers) and named it Zieh-i-Málík Sháhí.

The era came into force on Friday, Ramadan, 10, A.H. 471 corresponding to A.D. 1079, March 15. Before the existence of the Jaláli era, a year used to begin from the time when the sun entered the middle-half of the Pisces. Khayyám began the year from the first of Farwardin, corresponding

¹ *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iv, p. 180

with Nuqta-í-E'tadál-í-Rabí'í, ¹ when the sun enters the Aries. Although eighteen days had elapsed, Khayyám counted the days of the year from the first of Farwardín, because this was the very day when day and night were exactly equal on the Nuqta-i-Rabí'í (Equinox). Khayyám named this day the Sultán's New Year's day or Naurúz-i-Sultání.

The era in vogue to-day among the Parsees is just actually the same as that amended by 'Umar Khayyám and which they consider as the Yazdí-Jurdi system. The same system was followed in the reign of Akbar in India and is still current in the dominions of His Exalted Highness the Nizám of Haidarábád.

Khayyám's profound command over the arts and sciences and more especially over mathematics and astronomy can be ascertained only when the Jalálí system is compared with that of the Gregorian.²

¹ Nuqta-i-E'tadál-í-Rabí'í, or Equinox, means the point of time when the day and night are exactly equal on the eleventh day of the sun entering the Aries, according to the calculation of the astronomers of India.

² It was in A.D. 1079 when Málik Sháh ordered the astronomical researches, resulting in a thorough reform in the Persian calendar. It was by all means superior to that of Gregory's amendment of 600 years. According to the Gregorian system, there is a difference of three days after ten thousand years. But, according to the Arab era, there is a difference of two days only in the same period.

The fraction obtained in the latter system in four centuries was made up by Khayyám in thirty-three years. It was a nominal difference only in Khayyám's system of less than a minute a day and, if he had lived another four years, he would have rendered it thoroughly identical. All the great writers of the East and the West admit with one accord that the system introduced by Khayyám surpassed all the previous systems in accuracy, and that it was in absolute conformity with the principles of astronomy and quite serviceable for administrative purposes.

The Jalálí year was in no way connected with any sacred event of history, so it had not the privilege of any permanency attached to it. It enjoyed a short lived existence for fourteen years only, that is, as long as Malik Sháh lived. His successors, unfortunately dropped it altogether. Nevertheless, this important event is bound to immortalize the names of both Malik Sháh and Khayyám.

No historian has taken pains to ascertain the amount of reward, if any, awarded to Khayyám and the other notable men who assisted him. But Oriental rulers are generous and, on occasions such as this, no doubt valuable remuneration was awarded. The literary allowance granted by Nizámu'l Mulk, before Khayyám's introduction of the Jalálí year, should be considered as practically emanating from Malik Sháh himself. Besides this, it is the general character of the Oriental Courts to grant estates

and Jágírs to men before granting them a seat in the Darbár. The same conclusion may be inferred from Nizámu'l-Mulk's statement: 'Khayyám came to Merv in the reign of Sultán Málik Sháh. He was highly applauded for his scientific attainments and the Sultán gave him rewards for his great learning. Great rank and dignity were conferred on him, as due to the learned and the doctors.'

‡ I now give a short account, generally ignored by modern writers, of the seven members, who formed the advisory council with Khayyám as their President.

1. Khwája Abú Hátimu'l-Muzaffar Isfarázi. The Khwája belonged to Isfaráz, a town of Sajistán or Sístan. He preferred to live at Merv, the seat of the Government. He was a great genius among the well-known contemporaries of Khayyám to whom he always accorded an open-hearted reception whenever he visited him at Merv. In these meetings they held interesting and intelligent discussions on psychological, metaphysical and other complex and important subjects. The Khwája used to give lectures to his students on scientific researches and, unlike his friend Khayyám, treated them very liberally in the expounding of the most useful observations. He wrote several works on mathematics and the heavenly bodies. He prepared a balance after much labour and called it 'Mízán-i-Arshmídas.' It pointed out the weight and the

purity or impurity of silver and gold. He made over the balance to the chamberlain of the imperial treasury who was a devil incarnate. Fearing the detection of his misappropriations and embezzlements, he committed the diabolical act of crushing the balance and destroying all its joints and pieces. As soon as the sad news of the loss of this rare instrument, which the Khwāja had prepared after life-long labour and with wonderful skill, reached him, he succumbed to this sudden and fatal blow and passed away from this wicked and ungrateful world.¹

2. Abú'l-Fataḥ 'Abdu'r-Raḥmān Khazānī. He was the favourite slave of Miskavach Abū 'Alī Khaznī, an aristocrat of Merv. He had a profound knowledge of mathematics. He prepared a calendar for Sultān Sanjar Saljūqī, known as the Sanjari Calendar. In his last days he lived the life of a Darwīsh in seclusion. Once Sultān Sanjar sent him one thousand dinars (equivalent to 5,000 rupces). He returned the whole sum with the message that his yearly expenses amounted to three dinars only, because he needed only two loaves daily in the morning and meat three times a week ; that he had in his possession at the moment ten dinars ; that if he remained alive after the ten dinars were spent, God would provide him with the means for his

¹ See Nizāmī Arūzī Samarqandī, *Chahar Maqāla*, Shahr Dorī, *Tārikḥu'l-Hukamā*.

further expenses. His only worldly fortune was a cat. Ḥákím Ḥasan Samarqandí was his illustrious pupil.

3. Muḥammad Khazin. Nothing is known about him.

4. Ḥákím Abú'l-'Abbás Lokrí. He belonged to Lokar, an important town situated on the Merv canal, near Panj-Deh. Some historians have called him Ḥákím Lokrí only. He was the pupil of Bahmán Yár. It was through him that science flourished in Khurásán. He was a millionaire and had landed property in the suburb of Merv. None of his contemporaries, not even Ibn Koshak and Wastí, could surpass him in science. He was a poet also and has left to posterity a collection of verses. His style was very difficult and elaborate. In his last days he became blind and to his great grief could not make any further progress in literary attainments. In his blind days he always thought of life after death. One day before his death he ate the fried leg and head of a goat to his heart's content and the same day his pupils took him to a bath. On his return he felt indisposed and went to bed. When a physician came to treat him, he exclaimed: 'Oh! leave me to God. If I recover, it is His will; if I die it is His command'. At last the illness proved fatal.¹

5 Maimun bin Najib Wastī He was a physician and a doctor of renown Some consider that he was born in Khoz, others that he was born in Wasit Nizamu'l-Mulk had a great regard for him and so he often lived in Hirāt He disliked the calling on the rulers and aristocrats of the day.¹

6 Muhammad bin Ahmad Mamurī Bahraqī He was a great mathematical scholar His work on mensuration is considered to be of great worth Mālik Shah summoned him to the observatory at Isfahān Khayyām had a high regard for him as a great mathematician He lived in Sultān Muhammad Saljuqī's reign He was murdered by an Isma'īlian assassin.²

7 Abu'l Fatah ibn Kushak He was a distinguished doctor His works were the favourite study of Sultān Sanjar and were given a special place in his library.³

¹ See *Kāmil i Asir*

² See *Shahr Zuri Kāmil Asir*

³ See *Ibid*

CHAPTER III

KHAYYÁM AS A POET

THE facts connected with Khayyám's life show that the passion for poetry lay dormant in his youthful breast. He was also inspired by an earnest desire for research. At last, when his mind, with an amplitude for greater deeds in the realm of learning, had triumphantly accomplished its noble task, it began to burn with the celestial fire of poesy. The flame then burst forth in all its radiance, and illuminated the vastness of his knowledge and the store of wisdom—the outcome of his unrivalled mastery over the sciences of his age. His commanding personality, as a philosopher and an astronomer, was great. Poetry was not the medium of his success and greatness. It was only a pastime for him. It was, comparatively speaking, a bud in his all-blossoming garden of learning of variegated plants. It is really surprising that he had such undisputed mastery over astrology, astronomy, law, literature and history, but, in spite of this brilliant constellation of learning, the horizon of his fame lies to-day in absolute darkness. It is his poetry that has immortalized him.

Persia abounds in poets of no mean ability and importance, but the philosophic tinge of Khayyám's quatrains has its own charms which eminently distinguishes him from other poets. Every hemistich is full of fine, thrilling and sage-like inspirations. The world and its constitution, the mysteries of creation and the subtleties of existence are problems expounded by him with graceful eloquence.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that these quatrains have no philosophic value, that they impart no moral precepts, and that they are devoid of any complicated problems of life. We have to see whether they have those ingredients which constitute fundamental essentials for sublime poetry. In other words, we have to judge him as a poet only putting aside for the time being his other accomplishments.

The essential requirements of good poetry are nobility, fineness, richness and delicacy of idealistic thoughts and emotions robed in elegant and fine language. A poet, for instance, takes an ordinary idea or fact, but he expresses it by means of imaginative and passionate language in such a sublime and beautiful manner as to move the hearts of others to ecstatic pathos, and to appeal to the finer emotions of mankind. The beauties of diction have their own charms and characteristics. Sometimes, it is the style, simple and racy, sweet, appealing and brilliant; sometimes it is the change in the

form of expression ; sometimes it is the poetical form of argument or wit and humour ; and sometimes the similes and metaphorical flights of imagination.

Truly speaking, it is one of the noblest gifts of nature which does not fall to the common lot of every poet. The hearer is thrilled with ringing notes, but he is unconscious of what it is that impassions him and affects him, and how and in what manner it is all really done.

خوبی همین کرشمه و ناز خرام نیست
بسیار شیوه هاست بقیان را که نام نیست *

The charm does not lie only in attraction and graceful walk ; there are many things which the fair ones possess (to win hearts) and which have no name of their own.

Justinian's Theodora is also thus described by Gibbon : ' painting and poetry were incapable of delineating the matchless excellence of her form.' ' As to the charm of poetry ', says the great French philosopher, Henri Bergson, ' its rhythm masters us, our mind is enchanted, and is led captive by the thought of the poet ; his words conjure up images before our eyes. We are admitted into the living history of the poet's mind ; there we attain in sympathy that which without his magic we should have missed. ' ¹

¹ Bergson, *An account of his Life and Philosophy*, p. 399.

What do Khayyūm's quatrains teach us? What feelings, thoughts and emotions do they convey? They deal with different aspects of life and in sundry ways of their own. Some contain the mandates of the Holy Book, some the contents of the Alhidith (sacred traditions) of the Prophet and some the sayings of great sages. Some of them deal with the instability of the universe, some are in praise of wine, others teach us the virtues of repentance and impart consolation to us by showing us how to save ourselves from the penalties of our sins. They evoke melancholy cheerfulness. They are 'pensive beauty smiling in her tears.' They prove the frailty of human nature. The poet deals with the same subject in different colours and forms, but, each time, he creates a new effect and charm, imparting ethical and intellectual pleasure at every new attempt. His aesthetic character of writing distinguishes him from others, it has the special touch of an accomplished artist, indifferent to anything but Nature in the full glory of its musical attraction. It sheds a light on the psychological mood and character of the poet in their advanced stage and mystic form.

And here the singer for his Art
 Not all in vain may plead
 The song that nerves a nation's heart
 Is in itself a deed

(TRANSLATION.)

Khayyám's poetry has a permanent force in literature. His quatrains are of universal interest. He clothes his thoughts in simple, effective, sad but tender and true language that touches the heart. He has the cry of an idealist for all time, irrespective of any caste, creed or colour. He speaks things substantial, for the man of genius, the artist, the poor, the rich, the simple and the pompous alike. He has the force of a saintly and moral self-suppression. He does not seek happiness in mere self-aggrandisement and self-assertion, but passes his verdict for one and all. He gathers roses from thorny bushes with the consummate skill of an accomplished artist, in order to relieve the sufferings of humanity and to impart consolation to it in its saddest moments. In his songs we find the Elysian beds of pure, delicious and transcendental streams of creative imagination and pathos. They are real, enduring and full of entertainment. He has the art, the intelligence, the refinement, the genius, the originality and the charms of a born poet. He is a guiding star to the path of love; love which is truth, truth which is God and God who is all love and truth. He says:—

چون بود ازل بود مرا انشا کرد
 با من ز نخست درس عشق املا کرد *
 آنگاه قراضه ریزه قلب مرا
 مفتاح در خزائن معنی کرد *

When the eternal God composed me,
 From the very beginning he dictated the lesson of
 love to me,
 It was then when He converted the fragments¹ of
 my heart into
 A key to the door of the treasures of wisdom

He cries and craves persistently for a cup of wine
 But this cup is not the cup of the materialist or the
 licentious, but the cup full of the Beloved's love
 Thus Háfiz —

ما در پداله عکس رخ یار دیده ام
 ای به حیر رلدت شرب مدام ما * (حافظ)

We have seen our Beloved's reflection in the cup
 O thou unconscious of the deliciousness of our
 never ending drink

Khayyam like Hafiz is affected by the environ-
 ments of his country, where grapes, roses and
 delicious fruits grow in profusion, and lives and
 breathes for a cup full with the juice of grapes, be-
 cause in it beams the shadow of the Beloved. He
 extends this cup to others with the courtesy of a
 philanthropic inebriate, but it does not contain the
 liquid which is mean, debasing and which sometimes
 makes one hopelessly loathsome. It is full of truth
 and has a spiritual force. It is not for those who
 are not self contained. It is for the selfless and

¹ Qaradah means flings a small particle (of gold or silver)
 what falls off in fling

the true devotees and seekers after truth. It is of such poetry that Shelley says :¹ ' Poetry, awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar ; it reproduces all that it represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it co-exists. '

Khayyám's great and most admirable theme is ' The Present.' He insistently persuades us to make the most of it. It is only the utilization of the moments of life that constitute what is called ' life ' in its strictest sense. It is a mission that we have been sent in the world to perform under certain laws and regulations of nature. If we adhere to these laws, we prosper, otherwise we prematurely perish. But this is the life in flesh and blood only. Khayyám asks us to do something over and above leading a common humdrum life, which is nobler, higher, more sublime and beautiful. It is the purifying of heart and soul and the abstaining from things conducive to the pollution

¹ *Prose Works*, vol. i, p. 11.

of life. It is the attainment and perfection of spiritual life that knows no death. Along with the prolific and bountiful enjoyments based on the laws of nature that lead to physical development and save us from untimely decay, it is our paramount duty to cultivate ourselves and try to approach nearer and nearer to One who nourishes and sustains us. Anything which is not in full harmony with nature ought not to be adopted. And every moment has for its object the practical utility of life in an atmosphere, flowing with the refined calm of real enjoyment, and the performance of acts that elevate the soul and foster the psychological rise of humanity. Khayyam gives us repeated warnings that the days of our life are numbered and that whosoever once bids farewell to this life proceeds to a world from whose bourne no one returns. The moments that fly never come back, the moments that are wasted leave a gap that cannot be filled up, the moments that are given to the commission of sins leave a record so bad that it is difficult to efface it. Every individual, therefore, has a stupendous task before him to fulfil. It is the task of life and it cannot be done until and unless the fleeting moments are utilized in the performance of virtuous acts. No despondence, no lack of hope, no shirking from duty, no straying from the path carved out for us by nature, can help us in any way. They will, on the contrary, lead us to damnation.

Our aspirations, our ambitions, our feelings and emotions and our hopes should not be deceptive and fantastical. No building of castles in the air will be of any avail at all. 'The Present' should be rightly utilized to the full. It is the legal, natural, religious and spiritual duty imposed on us to perform. And we should perform it with thorough honesty, sincerity of purpose, indefatigable energy, unflinching devotion and unswerving loyalty to truth. The days pass by to appear again, the nights come and go, the stars fade and twinkle again, the seasons appear and disappear, the rivers flow, the birds sing and the planets revolve in endless succession. What is it all for? It is the duty that nature has imposed on them and which they are performing with never-failing punctuality. For, what is nature? It is the most powerful and most wonderful manifestation of the handicraft of 'The Most Beautiful' and 'The Most Sublime Power.' Every grand and imposing spectacle, all lovely scenery, every fascinating beauty are only shadows of the Beautiful, the Omnipotent. The reality of nature is visible only to those who endeavour to discern it. For whom are these things made? They are surely made for us. We have a variety of innumerable innocent enjoyments and recreations at our command. Even that which we call sorrow and calamity has a charm about it, if it is the outcome of truth and love. It is our misdeeds that

cause the horrors of life. And they are self-begotten of selfishness. It rests with us to make or unmake our life. It is 'The Present' that has a deep and inexplicable significance. Let it bear fruit. Let its sanctity help to refine and soothe humanity. Our forefathers have left us a mission and we should leave a task to our posterity for the amelioration of mankind in general, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Be it black or white, ugly or beautiful, it is all the creation of one God and the children of one man and woman, Adam and Eve. The world and its so-called false advocates of culture, liberty and civilization are only the élite of selfishness. Nature is just and impartial and anything against it is an outrage to it, and of which we are the responsible authors. The world is a place that can be made beautiful and comfortable. It is a trust given to us by God; but, we practically ignore its fulfilment. We deceive ourselves and nature under the garb of culture and civilization. Nature wants us to make our life ideal as well as practical. Any deviation from its laws makes us suffer. What we look upon in the flush of youth and power, and in the full force of manhood and womanhood drawn by the same illegal and unwarrantable fascination together, is wrong; when we are led by many ephemeral temptations to the breach of the laws of nature, when we perpetrate outrages not only on society but on ourselves also,

when we see the fountain-head of pleasure and profit in the gratification of sensual desires, then it is in reality an irreparable loss and an irretrievable calamity. Self-denial and self-restraint will win the laurels of success and the crowning victory in life. It is within ourselves to make this world our paradise or hell. Life passes away and will pass away. Why not think for a moment and work in harmony with nature?

In conclusion, it may be said that the taste of those who, not perceiving the reality, regard Khayyám's quatrains from a materialistic standpoint only is false and immature. And what is false taste but want of perception to discern propriety and beauty. Their knowledge, experience and observations are only relative; they stop at it and do not advance further to attain the absolute or perfection.

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife !
 To all the sensual world proclaim,
 One crowded hour of glorious life
 Is worth an age without a name—(Anon).

CHAPTER IV

PRAYER AND CONFESSION OF SINS

THE days of life are fleeting and numbered Its glory is short lived To persuade one to take a lesson from this is no new precept Khayyám introduces this problem afresh and anew, each time creating a broad and intelligible effect Repentance to secure redemption from the penalty of sin is a subject frequently dealt with by poets, but Khayyám presents it to us in a style so pathetic, that it directly appeals to our hearts

بر سینهٔ عم پدر من رحمت کن

* بر جان و دین اسیر من رحمت کن

بر پائے حرابات رو من بخشائے

* بر دست پداله گنر من رحمت کن

- . Shower Thy mercy, O Lord on my sorrow enter-
taining breast,
On my life and on my captive heart,
* Confer Thy gifts on my feet treading the path of
evil
And have mercy, O God on my cup bearing hand !

He prays for salvation for others He also in-
vokes the mercy of God to save his hands and feet

from the torments of hell. This is a novelty of expression which tends to increase the effect of the prayer, because to pray for one's own self may be looked upon as selfishness. The art lies in the fact that the innocence of limbs is easily proved, because 'they are not guilty of the commission of crimes. They are mere tools and agents in the execution of actions not warranted by law and they are subject to the will of man.

An Urdu poet says :—

فقط امید ہی بخشش کی تیری رحمت سے
وگر نہ عفو کے قابل میرے کذاب نہین * (آباد)

It is Thy compassion only that I depend upon for
Thy forgiveness ;

Otherwise my sins are too great to be pardoned.

(Ábád).

در ملک تو از طاعت ما هیچ فزود
وز معصیتے کہ هست نقصانے بود *
بگذار و مگیر زان کہ معلوم شد
گیرنده دیری و گذارنده زود *

What addition did my obedience make to Thy
jurisdiction ?

And what harm has been caused to Thee by the
sins I have committed ?

Forgive me, O God, do not convict me for I have
found out that Thou

Taketh to task late and pardoneth soon.

The poet addresses God thus 'O Almighty, if I obeyed Thee, it did not increase the limits of Thy empire and, if I committed sins, what harm has been occasioned to Thee thereby? O God, release me, because I am convinced that Thou art too compassionate to pass the sentence of punishment after repeated omissions and commissions, and art always ready to free sinners from the penalty of evil actions.'

میں بندۂ عاصمِ روائے تو کجا ست
تاریکِ دلمِ درِ صفائے تو کجا ست *
مرا تو بہشت اگر نہ طاعت محشی
آن بیعِ بودِ لطف و عطائے تو کجا ست *

I am a sinful slave, where is Thy good will?
I have a black heart, where is the light of Thy
clearness?
If Thou compensates my obedience for Paradise,
That would be a barter, where (then) is Thy
kindness and reward?

. The beautiful words and the attractive style in which this prayer is couched are remarkably effective and form an instance of fine poetic art. He prays to God most submissively expressing his inability to protect himself from the commission of sins, because human nature is frail and liable to err and so man clings to transgressions. He pleads that, if Paradise was granted to man as a remuneration for obedience, it would assume the form of

a mercantile transaction which does not befit the Emperor of the whole creation. He, therefore, says : ' Wherein does Thy kindness, mercy and reward, so well-known to human creatures, lie ? ' The same subject has been dealt with by Shaikh Sa'dí in his *Gulistán* which is considered to be one of the marvels of literature. Sa'dí says:—*بدريوزه گری*—*آمدہ ام نہ بہ تجارت* ' I have come for begging and not for trade. '

FitzGerald seems to have taken his inspiration from a different writer:—

Oh Thou Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the snake :
For all the sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give and take.

آنم کہ پدید گشتم از قدرت تو
صد سالہ شدم بناز در نعمت تو *
صد سال بہ امتحان گنہ خواہم کرد
تا جرم من است بیش یا رحمت تو *

I am one who came into being by Thy power,
I passed one hundred years in comfort making use
of Thy boons,
I will, for (another) hundred years, commit sins
to test
Whether my sins are greater or Thy mercy.

The manner in which the poet asks for forgiveness is noticeable. He says that in order to find

out whether God's mercy surpasses his (poet's) sins, he will try to pass another hundred years in sinning against divine law

فریاد کہ عمر و وقت مرده و بربوده
 ہم نعمت حرام ہم نفس آلودہ *
 فرمودہ ناکردہ سب سے رویم کرد
 فریاد ر کردہ ہائے ناکروردہ *

Ah ! life has passed away in absurdities,
 The very morsels I eat are unlawful and my desires
 are evil,
 The omissions of divine commandments have
 blackened my face,
 Ah ! I have committed things prohibited

Compare the verse of Khwāja Mir Dard —

تہمتیں چند اپنے ذمے دھر چلے
 کس لئے آئے تھے ہم کیا کر چلے *
 رندگانی کنا ہی اک طوفان ہی
 ہم تو اس حیلے کے ہاتھوں مر چلے * (درد)

Having involved ourselves in certain charges
 we leave,
 What we had come for and how (guilty) we are
 leaving !
 What is life ? It is a storm,
 We are dying at the hands of this existence

ابریق می مرا شکستی ربا

بر من در عیش را به بستی ربا *

بر خاک بریختی می لعل مرا

خاکم به دهن که سخت مستی ربا *

O God, Thou hast broken my vessel of wine,
(and thus),
Thou hast closed the door of luxury on me,
Thou hast spilt my crimson liquor on earth,
Dust be in my mouth (if I say) O God, Thou art
badly intoxicated.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the wordings of this quatrain fully indicate Khayyám's reckless impertinent mood of mind when he composed it. But in spite of all this impudence, there is a beauty in the expression of the fourth line, wherein the poet with awe and fear exclaims: 'May my mouth be filled with dust if I say: O God, Thou art badly intoxicated.' This is a striking instance of insolence and humility so beautifully brought together.

It is said that the *Rubá'iyát* excited the wrath of Almighty God, whereupon the poet's face turned jet black and his neck became curved. When he saw his face in the looking-glass, he wept bitterly for his conduct and in the extreme agony of

his feelings he at once wrote the following quatrain —

دا کرده گناه در جهان کیست نگو
 وان کس که گناه کرد چون رست نگو *
 من بد کنم و تو بد مکافات دهی
 پس فرق میان من و تو چیست نگو *

Pray tell me, who is there in the world who is not
 a sinner,
 He who did not commit wrong, point out how he
 lived?
 If I do a wrongful act and Thou givest me an evil
 punishment therefor,
 Say, where does the difference lie between Thee
 and me?

It is said that no sooner had Khayyám composed this verse than God became merciful to him. His face became brilliant and his neck was restored to its proper condition. However, there is a divergence of opinion about the divine punishment our poet had to suffer, and I would remark that, if this story be treated as unfounded and worthless, it may be pleaded that there is nothing strange in the divine wrath being provoked by a sinful act or word. In absence of any evidence for the truth in the story, it may be submitted that it is only the ratiocination of certain writers, which gave them food for needless, misguided and perhaps mischievous comment. The *Rubá'iyat* invoking the mercy

of God is nothing but the natural product of the fertile brain of our mystical, truthful and devoted poet. He confesses his guilt and asks for forgiveness in melodious strains and with fascinating humility. Many Persian poets have endeavoured to strike the same note. Nizámí says :—

گنہ من ار آمدے در شمار
ترا نام کے بودے آمرزگار * (نظامی)

If my sins were counted, how could they call Thee
Forgiver of sins,

An Indian (Urdu) poet says :—

عوض نہ لے میرے جرم و گناہ بیحد کا
الہی تجھ کو غفور الرحیم کہتے ہیں *
کہیں کہیں نہ عدو دیکھ کر مجھ سے محتاج
یہ اون کے بندے ہیں جن کو کریم کہتے ہیں *

Oh! do not revenge my evil-doings and endless
sins,

For, O God, they call Thee ‘Forgiver of sins and
most Compassionate,’

(If Thou takest me to task) the enemies (i.e. the
atheists) peradventure exclaim :

‘This fellow claims to be the slave of One who is
called the Merciful God.’

With due deference to the great poets of the world and their admirers, it may be said that Khayyám is gifted with a charm of unique expression all his own. He tries to convince us that, in cases of

punishment, both the culprit and the master stand on an equal footing. His method of deductive reasoning is not clothed in affirmative statements ; but in interrogatories, which imparts a most brilliant and magical effect to his ravishing songs.

Amir, the Indian poet, expresses almost the same thought in beautiful language :—

موقوف حرم ہی نہ کرم کا طہور تھا
 بندے اگر قصور نہ کرتے تصور تھا * (امیر)

The proof of God's compassion lay chiefly in our guilt,

It had been a fault of his creatures, had they committed no faults

ای ذات اسرار صمد میر ہمہ کس
 در حالت عجز دستگیر ہمہ کس *
 تارک تو مرا توبہ دہ و عذر پذیر
 ای توبہ دہ و عذر پذیر ہمہ کس *

O Thou who art fully conversant with the secrets of all hearts,

And who supportest all persons in their hour of need ;

Grant me, O God, repentance and accept my pleas,

O Thou, grant to all repentance and entertain their pleas.

The poet believes that none but God and God only has the knowledge of the unknowable, and that real consolation to man in the hour of distress emanates from Him only.

The poet Dagh says :—

هو ٽي هي دعا كافر و ديندار كي مقبول
لڻا هي دعا كا اثر الله ڪي گهر ٻي * (داغ)

The prayers both of the infidel and the believer
alike are accepted,
Oh ! the house of God ! where the effect of prayer
is looted.

گر گوهر طاعت نه سقتم هرگز
گرد گنه از چهره نه رفتم هرگز *
با اين همه نو ميد نيم از كرم
زان رو كه يڪي را دو نه گفتم هرگز *

If I never threaded the pearl of obedience,
And never wiped the dust of my sins from my face,
I am not, however, disappointed of Thy gracious-
ness,
Because I never counted One as two.

Khayyám says that no man on account of his
sins should be disappointed of the graciousness
and mercy of God, provided he believes in the
Unity. This quatrain is an evidence of the poet's
thorough conviction of the fact that there is no God
but One, and none can share His Oneness with
Him. Here is FitzGerald's rendering of this
verse :—

If I myself upon a looser creed
Have loosely strung the jewel of good deed,
Let this one thing for my atonement plead,
That One for Two I never did misread.

CHAPTER V

WIT AND HUMOUR

THOUGH Khayyám was a philosopher, we still find some of his quatrains full of dignified wit and humour. He is never irreverent as FitzGerald some times is in his translation of Khayyám's quatrains

ای چرخ رگردش تو حرسد بیم
آراد کنم که لائق بند بیم *
گرمیل تو دانه حرد و نا اهل است
من نیز چنان اهل و حرد بند بیم *

O firmament, I am not happy with thy revolving,
Deliver me, for I am not fit for bondage,
If thou doth love the simpletons and the incompetent,
I also am not so capable and wise

It is a peculiar characteristic of the Oriental poets to think that the firmament is always at war with the wise and never gives them rest. It is considered that its regular revolutions affect the destiny of mankind. The poet, likewise, persuades us to think that, if it extends its love to the ignorant and the fool, he (the poet) is also not so wise and worthy as he is considered to be. He convinces us

that its revolutionary effects have almost upset him and so it was just the time when to release him from the bondage of misery.

The moral that can be drawn from this quatrain is that a competent man of wise judgment should not pick quarrels with the ignorant and the fickle-minded fool, as the latter cannot appreciate the worth of the educated gentlemen of character. The best way to deal with an incompetent fool is to make a fool of him by conciliatory speech.

در مسجد اگر بهر نیاز آمده ام
 بالله که نه از بهر نماز آمده ام *
 یک روز اینجا سجاده دزدیدم
 آن گم شده است از آن باز آمده ام *

If I have come into the mosque to lay myself
 prostrate before God,
 By Jove, my object is not to say my prayers,
 'One day, I stole the prayer-carpet here,
 That is lost, so I have come again (to steal another).

It is a direct attack on those Muslims who attend the mosque to say their prayers for show; but practically they have their own worldly interests in attending the mosque: a fact which is absolutely contrary to the doctrine and spirit of the Faith. They bend their heads before the Omnipotent in submission but their hearts are engrossed in things not warranted by religion. The poet seeks

to convince them that this state of affairs bears no significant value. The case is not applicable to any particular creed, sect or religion; but it may be equally applied to the adherents of any Faith, who attend their temples for reasons and motives of their own, or for show of conventionalism other than that of the whole-hearted worship of the Almighty God. The poet in the simplicity of his solemn song goes on to solve the complicated problems of life and its wonders, and with a stroke of combined wit and humour appeals to the inner consciousness of humanity to lift itself up to thoughts serene and sublime, high and noble, in order to attain immortality and to claim the affection of God, the Creator of all we see, or perceive or can think of.

• نَرَنَد که می سحر که شـبـان نه رواست

نه نیر رجب که آن مه خاص خداست *

شعبان و رجب ، هـ خدايد و رسول

ما می رمضان خوریم کان خاصه ماست *

They say it is unlawful to drink wine in the month
of Sha'bân

And in Rajab also, because it is consecrated to
God.

Sha'bân and Rajab are the months of God and His
Prophet,

We, therefore, drink wine in the month of Ramaḍân
because it is our own month.

In Persia, certain months bear special attributes. For instance, they call Sha'bân the month of the Prophet, and Rajab the month of God. Religiously, Ramadân is the month which the Muslims hold very sacred. They fast the whole day from before the dawn to sunset and at evenings they recite the Qur'ân-i-Majid. The orthodox spend their time in worship and devotion. On this basis, the poet claims the Ramadân to be his own month, because the Iranians think it unbecoming for one to take wine in Sha'bân and Rajab (strong drink is however absolutely forbidden by the Muslim faith). But Khayyâm, who advocates the use of wine though certainly in a mystic sense, proclaims that he drinks the effervescent liquor of God's love in Ramadân, because it is the month of a devoted Muslim.

گویند که آن کسان که با پردهیز اند
 زان سان که بمیرند بدان سان خیزند *
 ما با می و معشوق ازانیم مغیم
 تا بو که به حشر آن چنان انگیزند *

They say that those who keep aloof from prohibi-
 tions,
 Shall rise up (from their graves) in the same condi-
 tion as they die,
 We abide by wine and a sweet-heart on the ground
 But
 We may also wake up on the day of re-urrection
 in the same condition.

It is a well known belief among the Muslims that human beings rising from their graves will wake up to existence in the same mood and with the same thoughts in which they were and had at the time of their death Khayyám asserts that the main cause of his indulgence in wine and love of the fair sex lies in the fact that he also may rise up on the day of judgment in the doubly blissful company of women and wine. Quatrains like this have led modern writers to believe that Khayyám did use women and wine but it is a fatal mistake to think so. Khayyám is an epigrammatic poet and there is a wide field for poets to give vent to their erotic thoughts. There are certain things in mystic or divine poetry which are analogous with physical or human affairs. By wine and women Khayyám alludes to divine love¹. It is the thought of the Almighty God that is buried with a devoted saint and not the women in flesh and blood. It is the intoxication of divine love which will be reeling the heads of the lovers of God when they rise up from their graves and not the bottle of wine.

گویند که ماه روزه درونک رسد
 من بعد نه گرد نه میتوان کردند *
 در آخر شعبان حکرم چندان می
 کاند رقصان مست حکم تا عید *

¹ For a good glossary of the mystical meaning of Sufi terms, see Palmer *Oriental Mysticism* Appendix pp 69-81

They say that the month of fasting is approaching,
 And when it begins, I will not whirl round the wine,
 But I will take so much of it at the close of
 Sha'bán,
 That I shall sleep badly intoxicated throughout the
 month of Ramaḍán to wake up only on the 'Íd
 (morning).

In Persia all the Muslim poets, whose motto is
 'the cup and the beloved', give up drinking in the
 month of Ramaḍán. Our poet is devising means to
 take so much of the liquor, before the fasting days
 begin, as to lie unconscious throughout the month
 of Ramaḍán only to get up from his bed on the
 day of the 'Íd, the feast day which follows the
 fast.

می خوردن این ماه روا نیست
 مستانه تو آن خورد به شب بک دو سه سه *
 یا خورد بدانگونه ببايد که زمستی
 تا شام دگر بر نه تو آن خاست ز بستر *

Although it is not allowed to take wine in this
 month (Ramaḍán), but
 One may take one, two or, three cups of it at night
 to become thoroughly drunk,
 Or so much should be taken as to make one so un-
 conscious,
 That it may become impossible for him to rise up
 from bed till the next evening comes.

A certain poet has described the same idea very beautifully thus —

قرب نک ماہ بہ میچہ اقامت کردم
اتفاقاً رمضان بود می دانستم *

I stayed in the liquor house for about a month,
Accidentally it was Ramadan which I never
knew

The beauty in the idea lies simply in the attempt to defeat the injunctions of religion and may be treated as poetical license. To the orthodox it is a blasphemy, but to the poets and the layman it is a marvellous feat of poetical sagacity and refinement of thought

می خوردن و گرد نیکو ان کردند
به رادکه به رز راهده وریدن *
گر عاشق و مسد دورحی خواهد بود
پس روه بهشت کس به خواهد دیدن *

To drink wine and lovingly keep the company of
the good
Is better than to adopt a saint's hypocrisy
If hell is intended for the lover and the inebriate
No one then will even see the face of Paradise

Here, Khayyam looks reverently upon those who love the good and the beautiful and drink the draughts of the forbidden liquor, because they do not resort to the under hand practices of the zealot,

and whatever they do they do it openly; their commission of sins is an open secret, and they feel no reluctance in acknowledging their guilt. In the second couplet of the quatrain the poet emphasises the superiority of the lover and the inebriate. He wants to impress those, who pretend to be followers of holy commands, but commit all sorts of evil for their self-interest and lead a life of hypocrisy, with the fact that only those are entitled to Paradise who are drunk with pure divine love and do not impose upon others like hypocritical saints.

هر که که طلوع صبح آرزق باشد
 باید که به کف جام مروق باشد *
 گویند به افوا که می تلخ بود
 شاید که بهر حال که می حق باشد *

Although the morning dawn has the colour of a piebald horse,

It nevertheless behoves us to bear in hand a cup of pure juice of the grape.

It is generally said that the taste of wine is bitter, Peradventure the wine by all means imports truth with it.

There is an Arabic proverb¹ which means that truth is always bitter. Khayyám says that wine also tastes bitter and therefore it follows that wine is truth.

Mirzā Ghālib, perhaps, inspired also with this quatrain says:—

بگفت که نه تلخی سارو پند پذیر
 برو که ناده ما تلخ تر ازین پند است *

Hast thou not advised me to make bitterness congenial to my taste and accept advice, get off from hence for our wine is more bitter than thy advice.

The poet thus addresses the orthodox 'You ask us to bear bitterness and accept advice: we have to tell you that our wine is bitterer than such advice and therefore we stand in no need of it.'

دستے جو من کہ حم و ساغر گیرد
 حریف است که آن دنتر و منبر گیرد *
 تو زاهد خشکی و مدم دسق تر
 آتش نه شفیده که در تر گیرد *

For a hand like mine given to take hold of bowls of wine,
 It were wrong to take up Holy Records and the Pulpit;
 Thou art a dry (i.e., prejudiced) zealot and I a wet (i.e., downright) sinner,
 Thou hast never heard that fire ever caught a wet thing (i.e., water).

The poet thinks that he will not go to hell, because fire catches hold of dry things only, and that hell is possibly the lot of those who were

intolerable, arrogantly prejudiced and without real divine love.

من در رمضان روزه اگر میخوردم
تا ظن نه بری که بے خبر می خوردم *
از محنت روزه روز من چون شب شد
پنداشته بودم که سحر می خوردم *

If I break my fast in Ramaḍán,
Thou shouldest not think that I did it uncon-
sciously,
When the misery of fasting turned my day into
night,
I felt as if I was eating my Saḥar.¹

The poet confesses to have deliberately broken his fast, because the pains of fasting were so excruciating to him that he practically could not distinguish between day and night and was led to conjecture that he was taking his Saḥar meal. It is, however, nothing more than poetical exaggeration, and refinement of wit.

طبعم به نماز و روزه چون مائل شد
گفتم که مران کلیم حاصل شد *
افسوس که این وضو به باء به شکست
و ان روزه به نیم جرعه باطل شد *

¹ Saḥar means morning. It also means the meals taken in the Ramaḍán early before dawn within the time religiously prescribed for those who keep fasts.

When I felt inclined to prayer and fasting,
 I said that the sole object of my life was fulfilled :
 Alas! the ablution was broken by a (breath of)
 wind,
 And the fast became null and void by half a
 draught of wine.

This quatrain, in addition to its remarks on the expositions of the orthodox, also hints at the holy rituals performed by those hypocrites, whose observance of religious doctrines and penances is insincere and is meant only for display.

گویند که فردوس برین خواهد بود
 آجما ملے ناب و حور عین خواهد بود *
 کر ما ملی و معشوق گردیم چه ناک
 چون شاقبت کار چنین خواهد بود *

They say that in the sacred Paradise,
 Abound the crimson wine and large eyed Huris.
 What fear, then, if we make use of wine and comely
 girls,
 For at last this will be the fruit of the present life.

As regards those, who believe in the existence of Paradise and hope hereafter to enter therein, where there will be nothing but endless physical and sensual pleasures and an abundance of exhilarating and stimulating drinks, the poet doubts if they will ever see the full fruition of their hope, since they worship God in the hope of gaining Paradise. He further assures them that when such pleasures are

guaranteed in the life to come, it matters little, if they make use of them in the present mortal world.

زاهد گزید بهشت با حور خوش است
 من میگویم شراب انگور خوش است *
 ابن نقد بکیرد دست از ان نسیه بدار
 آواز دهل شنیدن از دور خوش است *

The pious man says that Paradise is worth enjoying
 with lovely Húris,
 I say that wine is more entertaining.
 Take this cash (i.e., the present available pleasures)
 and let that credit go,
 It is better to hear the sound of a drum from a
 distance.

Wine may be available at all times here in this world, whilst a Húrí is only to be had in Paradise. From the poet's point of view, it is better to take advantage of what we possess now than to keep aloof from it in expectation of enjoying a Húrí after death, because it is not known whether Paradise will really fall to the lot of every person.

Some for the Glories of this World ; and some
 Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come ;
 Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go
 Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum.
 (FitzGerald).

Khayyám advises us to make the best use of the present moments of life and to love God not for the sake of Paradise but for the love of God. 'I am

asked: Can you truly say that the life you live is really a happy one? You wander about with your gaze fixed upon the future, assuredly you thus lose the present. You press forward unceasingly, so that the life which now is must lose its attraction for you. Happier, surely happier, by far is he who ever lives wholly and gladly for the moment and is free from the consuming longing he who is satisfied with his present condition.'¹ It seems that this writer had in mind the same thoughts which possessed Khayyam when he composed this quatrain

ما را دوند درخى باشد مست
 قوله است خلاف دل درد نتوان بست *
 گر عاشق و مست درخى خواهد درد
 فردا بيدى بهشت را چون كعب دست *

They say that we drunkards are doomed to hell,
 (But it is) a statement untrue and not be relied
 upon,
 For if the lover and the drunkard goes to hell,
 To-morrow you will see that Paradise is (empty)
 like the hollow of a hand

Compare FitzGerald —

If but the Vine and Love abjuring Band,
 Are in the Prophet's Paradise to stand,
 Alack, I doubt the Prophet's Paradise
 Were empty as the hollow of one's Hand

¹ R. Winner *My Struggles for Light* •

Compare Dágh :—

صبرے زاهد نافرہم نہ میبخواروں کا
بخشنے والا بیٹی دیکھا ہی کفہکاروں کا * (داغ)

O simple orthodox, do not upbraid the drunkard,
For hast thou not seen the Generous Forgiver of
the sinner.

Khayyám says that, if it were really true that drunken lovers will not be blessed with the enjoyments of Heaven, the latter will be nothing short of (the hollow of the palm) a wilderness. He believes that love and intoxication are the essential facts of humanity and that there is no human being in the world who does not get inspired with them. Also the poet from a sinner's point of view relies with deepest conviction on the mercy and compassion of God and is hopeful of the blessings and enjoyments of Paradise.

گویند بہشت و حور و کوثر باشد
جوئے می و شہد و شیر و شکر باشد *
یک جام بدہ ز بادہ ام ای ساقی
نقدے ز ہزدر نسیہ بہتر باشد *

They speak of the would-be Paradise, of the Húrís
and of the fount of Kauthar,
Of the rivers of wine and honey and milk and
sugar.

O wine-server, place in my hand a cup of wine,
For cash is a thousand times better than credit.

Khayyám thinks that the love of God is in itself better than the expected Paradise. Let your lives be sanctified and your souls purified with this draught. Paradise will be a place of Huris, which will not be better than the ravishing contemplation of God. There is, moreover, no guarantee at all that every one is to enjoy the sweets of Paradise. It is, therefore, far better to make this life a better Paradise and enjoy its lawful pleasures.

ار هر چه حذر مرد شراب اولی تر
 ناسر حطان داده داب اولی تر *
 عالم همه سر سر رنای ست حراب
 در حائے حراب هم حراب اولی تر *

It is better to drink wine with whatsoever man
 takes it
 It is best to take the red wine with the lovely
 youths,
 The world is a tavern full of mischief,
 Since it is a wicked place, it is best to take the
 worst of it

آن داده خوشگوار بردستم نه
 آن ساعر چون نگار بردستم نه *
 آن من که چو رحیر پیچید حرد را
 دیوانه شدم بنار بردستم نه *

Place in my hand that pleasant wine,
 Place the cup, as lovely as a bonny maid, in my
 hand.
 That (boisterous) wine (the beads of which are)
 linked together like a coiling chain,
 I am mad after it, bring it and place it in my hand.

نہ لایق مسجد نہ در خورد گذشت
 ایزد داند گِلِ مرا از چہ سرشت *
 نہ دین و نہ دنیاؤ نہ امید بہشت
 چون کافر درویشم و چون قبحہ زشت *

I am neither fit for a mosque nor for a temple of
 idols,
 God only knows with what clay He moulded
 my clay.
 Devoid of faith and the luxuries of the world, and
 with no hopes of Paradise,
 I am just like a heathen priest and like an ugly
 harlot.

A person who suffers in the world from his daily
 wants and as a sinner is sure to suffer in the life to
 come, he is worse than a heathen priest or an ugly
 lewd person.

سر مست بہ میخانہ گذر کردم دوش
 پیرے دیدم مست و صبوغے بر دوش *
 گفتم ز خدا شرم نہ داری ای پیر
 گفتا کرم از خدا است رو بادہ بنوش *

I entered the tavern yesterday heated with wine,
I saw an old drunkard with a jar on his shoulder,
I said to him, 'Old man, dost not thou feel ashamed
before God'
He replied 'Mercy enunates from God, go and
drink wine'

This is a very severe rebuke to those scholars of Muslim theology who positively assert that drunkards will not find a place in Paradise. The poet, as encouraged by the divine promises, perfectly believes in God's compassion and in whose mercy only lies the salvation of the sinner.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Duck an Angel Shape
Bearing a vessel on his Shoulder, and
He bid me taste of it and 'twas—the Grape!
(FitzGerald).

CHAPTER VI

VICISSITUDES AND THE INSTABILITY OF THE WORLD

THE great mystery shrouding the remarkable success and untarnished reputation of some of the greatest poets of Persia lies not only in their intellectual gifts but, to a very reasonable extent, in their exposition of the simple but unfathomable philosophy of life, the instability of the world and the morals to be deduced therefrom. The first to deal with this particular theme is Khayyám, and he developed it to such an extent that others who came after him seem only to have aspired to sustain and nourish it. Khayyám's great command of language and creative imagination bears fruit in several quatrains almost alike in substance but pleasing with recurring entertainment.

خاکے کہ بزیر پائے ہر حیوانے است
زلف صنمے و عارض جانانے است *
ہر خشت کہ بر کنگرۂ ایوانے است
انگشت وزیرے و سر سلطانے است *

In the dust trodden by every creature,
 Are the locks of a beloved and the cheeks of a
 sweetheart
 Every brick in the minaret of a palace is
 The finger of a vizier and the head of a king

Sa'di has illustrated this theme with fictitious
 stories. For instance, he says —

شدمم ده بکت ناردردخانه
 سخن گفت ما ساندۀ ناله *
 که من فر فرمایدی داشتم
 ده سر بر کتد مہی داشتم *

I have heard that once on (the bank of) Tigris,
 A vizier said to a saint that
 It once possessed a ruler a glory,
 And its head wore the symbolic crown of superi-
 ority

Again Sa'di in a very pathetic style says —

ردم تیشہ بکت روز بر تیل خاک
 بگوش آمدم ناله درد مات *
 کہ رہار اگر مردی آہستہ تر
 کہ چشم و بناوش و روی است و سر *

One day I struck a mound of earth with my axe,
 Wherefrom this painful murmur broke on my ears,
 If thou art a man, be careful please to deal more
 gently,
 For herein lie eyes, ears, face and head

It seems that all Sa'dí's art is but the reflection of Khayyám's masterly style. Khayyám has treated this subject thus :—

دي كوزه گره بدیدم اندر بازار
 بر تازہ گلے لكد همي زد بسيار *
 وان گل به زبان حال با او مي گفت
 من همچو تو بوده ام مرا نيكو دار *

Yesterday, I saw a potter in the bazaar,
 Who pounded on and on a lump of clay.
 That clay with eloquent silence complained to him,
 Be kind to me, for once I was like thee.

The second line may be explained thus, namely, that it is a custom prevailing with Oriental potters to stand on wet clay and to pound it with their feet heavily.

Now comparing Sa'dí's verses and Khayyám's quatrain dealing with the same subject, it may be said that Sa'dí's words 'more gently' sound more beautiful and directly touch the heart. This may be treated as an improvement by Sa'dí which FitzGerald in his translation of the quatrain seems to have borrowed from him.

For I remember stopping by the way
 To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay ;
 And with its all-obliterated tongue,
 It murmur'd, ' Gently, Brother, gently, pray ! '

But Khayyám's way of reasoning is stronger and more elaborate. The words 'For once I was like thee, therefore treat me well' are far more pleasing than Sa'di's expression. Khayyám reproduces the same subject in a more dignified and refined manner as below —

بیش از من و تو لیل و نهار بوده است
 * گردنده فلک بر سرکار بوده است *
 رنهار قدم نه خاک آهسته مهین
 کین مردمک چشم نیکار بوده است *

There have been night and morning before me and thee,
 And the firmament has been all through revolving
 not aimlessly.
 Please keep thy feet carefully on earth,
 For in it lies the pupil of the eye of one who was
 once a beloved

Again Khayyám says. —

این کهنه رباط را که عالم نام است
 آرامگاه ابلق صبح و شام است *
 بر است که وامانده صد حمشید است
 * قهر است که تکیه گاه صد بهرام است *

This immemorial tavern which they call the world,
 Is the abode of rest of the morning and the evening
 piebald horse,
 It is an association left by a hundred Jamshíds,
 It is a palace which a hundred Bahráms have used
 as their resting pillow

FitzGerald translates it thus :—

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultān after Sultān with his Pomp,
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

خوش باش که عرصه بیکران خواهد بود
بر چرخ قران اختران خواهد بود *
خشته که ز قالب تو خواهند زدند
ایوان و بسترائے دیگران خواهد بود *

Be happy, for thou wilt have to face illimitable
anger,
And in the firmament there will be a constellation
of stars.

The brick that will be made out of thy mould
Will make the palace and the inn of others (to
come).

The constellation of heavenly bodies is considered by astrologers to be an omen of impending misfortunes and calamities. The poet means to say that after our death it will be beyond our power to make ourselves happy. We shall be surrounded by rough and frowning elements. Our dead bodies will be reduced to dust and bricks will be made out of our clay for building palaces and taverns. Moreover, we shall be held accountable for our actions in this life and, if we are doomed to hell, there will be

nothing but terrible misfortune in store for us. Therefore, the best course, advised by the poet, is to make ourselves under all circumstance as happy as we can, to enjoy the delights of this world, and, at the same time, never to forget the great vicissitudes in store for us after death. If we do not listen to this counsel and fail to make ourselves happy, we shall very likely have to suffer both in this world and in the next. Let us, therefore, try to eat, drink and be merry. We should, however, do it moderately and very cautiously, lest by an excess of pleasures, or by misuse and abuse of our power, we reap the fruits of our weakness. And if we do all we can, to make ourselves happy, by fair means certainly, we should exert ourselves to attain to that happiness which is real, enduring and congenial. The sole question is how to make ourselves happy in the real sense of the word. Plain living and high thinking are perhaps the best and most natural means by which to attain ideal happiness. *Cârpé diem*. Enjoy the present day; seize the opportunity. *Khayyâm* goes on to say:—

ای دل تو در آسوار معمه نه رسی

در نکتہ زبرکان و ادانا نه رسی *

انجبا زمینی و جام بهشتی تر ساز

کانبجا به بهشت میرسی یا نه رسی *

O heart thou canst not unfold the mysteries of the
 enigma,
 And canst not comprehend the paradox of the
 wise and the enlightened ;
 So here make this world a paradise with cup and
 wine,
 For there (in the next life) thou mayest or mayest
 not enter into Paradise.

Khayyám emphatically admonishes us not to lose the opportunity of happiness, otherwise we shall suffer for it. Dante¹ also sings in the same strain and persuades us not to let our opportunity slip from our hands.

Man can do violence
 To himself and his own blessings, and for this
 He, in the second round, must aye deplore,
 With unavailing penitence, his crime.
 Whoe'er deprives himself of life and light
 In reckless lavishment his talent wastes,
 And sorrows then when he should dwell in joy.

Epictetus² lays the whole burden of suffering on the sufferer : ' If a man is unhappy, this must be his own fault ; for God made all men to be happy.'

Seneca considers the life of those who do not lead it in happy pursuits as absolutely worthless. Life has to be passed somehow or other, why should it be worsted with needless sorrows. ' Who live without any design at all, and only pass in the world

¹ Lubbock, *the Pleasures of Life*, part 1, p. 6.

² *Ibid*, part 1, p. 16.

like straws on a river they do not go, they are carried'

Khayy im's imperative injunction to be happy means, in other words, the happiness of the soul. Yes, the soul should be made happy by an honest and excellent course of life. A pure and transeendental thing like the soul should be preserved from the torments of hell by the wise and prudent conduct of life.

Never mind if your clay be used for making bricks for palaces and taverns you will, by your fair conduct in life, at least, have the advantage of saving your soul from the endless and smouldering flames of hell. You may make flesh the mortal clay, the subject of sensual pleasures, but you cannot thus render your soul happy. The soul is a fine and delicate thing, it is immaterial and immortal, it is your real ego, and to make it happy means your everlasting happiness. Why corrupt this eternal gift of the Creator? Why not nourish and foster it with truth and the harmonious actions of virtue and piety so congenial to its sustenance? Khayy im says 'The hours of pleasure and anger are for a few years'. Why destroy your eternal happiness by a few moments' pleasure unwarranted by religion, dictates of morality and rules of society? The corruption of your happiness by a sinful course of

life is not only your destruction in the next world, but in this life also. ‘Every little action of the common day makes or unmakes character, and that, therefore, what one has done in the secret chamber one has some day to cry aloud on the housetop,’ says Oscar Wilde¹ who in the saddest moments of life, after most cheerful years, was forced to acknowledge the truth of his mother’s teaching in Goethe’s lines as translated by Carlyle,

Who never ate his bread in sorrow,
Who never spent the midnight hours
Weeping and waiting for the morrow,—
He knows you not, ye heavenly powers.

The opening words of *Khayyám* in the quatrain commencing خوش باش (be happy) are meant for those who waste their energy in fruitless sorrow. Of these people. Shakespeare in his sublime words says:—

Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to heaven.

And what is grief? It is a formula of hidden sweetness and ‘sweetest songs,’ as Shelley² sings to us:—

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not :
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught ;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

¹ *De Profundis*, p. 50. ² *The Pleasures of Life*, part 1.

It is not simply we ourselves who are affected by the pleasures of truth and by the agonies of happiness-killing actions, it is our soul in reality that feels and is affected by these things. Let us kill our vices and secure the happiness, which is abiding, lasting and eternal. Making ourselves happy and adopting noble means to our happiness is not only conducive to happiness in this world but also in the world to come. Love is the greatest source of our happiness. And there is no better love than the love of the Creator. And it is this love that can keep us in willing serfdom, that can cause us to eat, drink and be merry for its sake, that can organize our worldly concerns and then transform them into concerns divine. There is nothing worldly in our lives, if we live for the sake of God, and regulate our lives and our actions for the love of God. Our wives, our children, our friends, our relations, our actions, and, in short, everything concerned with us in life, is concerned with the love of God, if only we live for God's love which is the true source of happiness.

According to Sir T. Browne's advice, 'rather than follow a multitude to do evil, stand like Pompey's pillar, conspicuous by oneself, and single in integrity.' According to both the Bible and the Qur'án, believe in God's help and defy your enemies and sorrows, and stand by Him in the hour of need and distress for help comes from Him to those who love

Him. If you are an atheist, if you deny the existence of God, make the best of your time here for you will never again have the opportunity of being happy. Do not despair, but make yourself happy, for happiness is the key-note of existence.

So Providence for us, high, infinite,
Makes our necessities its watchful task,
Hearkens to all prayers, helps all our wants,
And e'en if it denies what seems our right,
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,
Or seems but to deny, and in denying grants.¹

(Leigh Hunt.)

We can make this world, our own' heaven or hell as we choose. We can make ourselves happy even in our sorrows.

Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate,
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free :
Strong to consume small troubles, to command
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to
the end.² (Aubrey de Vere.)

Khawāja Mír Dard asks us 'to keep our hearts alive' and continue to be young, even if time keeps its fingers on our hairs, forehead and limbs. He says :—

میرے یہ دل زندہ تو نہ مرجائے
کہ زندگانی عبارت ہی تیرے جینے سے *

I am afraid, O living heart, lest thou die,
For the interpretation of life lies in thy being alive.

¹ *The Pleasures of Life*, Part 1, p. 13.

² *Ibid*, p. 13.

Be happy, as Epictetus says, 'with that which happens, for what God chooses is better than what I choose'

Sádhana, says.¹ 'From joy does spring all this creation, by joy is it maintained, towards joy does it progress, and into joy does it enter.

Mír Dard says² —

ساقیا نان لگت رہا ہی چل جلاؤ

حب تلک دس چل سکے ساعر چلے *

O Saqi (cup bearer) here (in this world) we are under marching orders,

Let the (round of cup) proceed as long as possible.

Compare Mas'úd —

پی لے پلائے ساقی صحبت ہی چار دن کی

بہ دور آسمانی شاید بدل نہ جائے * (مسعود)

Drink thyself and get me drunk O Saqi, for this company is transitory,

(And) Perhaps this revolution of the heavens may take a different turn.

ای کورہ گر آب دوش اگر ہشیاری

تا چند کنی ہر گل آدم خواری *

انگشت فریدون و کف کیحسرو

ہر چرخ بہادۂ چہ می پنداری *

¹ Tagore, *The Realization of Life*, p 78

² دیوان میر درد 34

O Potter, sooth thy anger by drinking if thou hast
 some wisdom;
 How long wilt thou go on abusing human clay ?
 The finger of Farídún and the palm of Kaikhúsrú
 Thou hast placed on thy wheel ; dost thou know it ?

The poet advises us to be as kind to others as possible, for one day we shall die. The world has had proud kings and emperors. Where are they to-day ? Where are those rulers to-day who lived in majestic splendour ? Where are the proud heads whom jewelled crowns once adorned ?

Where are those tyrants to-day who swept over cities and countries, and committed murders and robberies in broad daylight merely for the attainment of their own so-called glory ? Where are the assassins of men, women and innocent children ? Where are those mean, selfish usurpers, who violated the rights of the indigent and orphans to satisfy their own greed ? In short, where are those who flourished in the days of their vigour and power, but are nowhere to-day ? They are all sleeping in their narrow graves. They are reduced to dust and ashes. Their bodies have been destroyed by worms and insects. The men whose hands brandished the sword ruthlessly, led great armies and ruled big nations are now whirling round and round on a potter's wheel. *Sic transit gloria mundi.* So passeth away earthly glory. And this is the state of things we notice in this materialistic world. No

one can say what terrible and perpetual agonies their souls may suffer to-day. It is a thing unknowable and God only, the Lord of creation, knows it. Mercy and kindness should therefore be the watchword of our life. *Verbum sat sapienti*. A word is enough for a wise man.

جامے است کہ عقل آردن می زندش
 صد بوسه ز مهر رجبین می زندش *
 وین کوزه گر دهر جفین حام لطیف
 می سازد و بار در زمین می زندش *

It is a cup which wisdom praises (with spell-bound admiration),

And kisses its brow a hundred times with affection
 And the Potter of the world, this nice cup
 Makes, and again unmakes it by striking it on earth

Or, as FitzGerald puts it —

Said one among them : ' Surely not in vain
 My substance of the common Earth was tak'n
 And to this Finger moulded, to be broke,
 Or trampled to shapeless Earth again.'

It is an illustration of the revelation of the deep mystery that 'All is from Him.' It is an instance of the endless phenomena of young and beautiful natures—nature in which we find a regular alternation of life and death, and a distribution and redistribution of the passing forms of the permanent whole. The universe is unstable and has all

through been undergoing the same inexorable change and flux ; but it has been always gay, young, and beautiful. An Indian poet in his simple and melancholy truism says :—

دنیا کے جو مزے ہیں ہرگز وہ کم نہ ہونگے

* چرچہ یہی رہیں گے افسوس ہم نہ ہونگے

That this gay world will go on as it is,
But unfortunately it will be we, who shall be no
more in this delightful cosmos.

Ghalib, the great poet of scientific vision, has portrayed this idea of constant disappearance and reappearance of things thus¹ :—

سب کہاں ! کچھ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہو گئے

* خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہونگی کہ پنہاں ہو گئے

Where are all !

Some of them have risen up in (the shape of) tulips
and roses,

What (wonderfully captivating) faces must be
(there) in the dust that have disappeared.

Sa'di is quite happy about this lamentable change.

He says :—

خوش است عمر دریا کہ جاودانی نیست

* پس اعتماد برین پنجروز فانی نیست

Life is a pleasure, but alas ! it is not everlasting,
One should, therefore, repose no confidence in its
short-lived egotism.

The truth, sad as it is, is a source of happiness. It opens for us a door to the endless pleasures of a beautiful landscape, where we can observe the real nature of things and where we may nourish our imagination with religious and ethical truths, ultimately leading us to the raptures of divine love. And this is the greatest virtue and happiness that our short existence teaches and imparts to us. *Omnia vincit amor* Love conquers all things —

ای بس کہ نباشیم و جهان خواهد بود

بے نام زما و بے نشان خواهد بود *

زین پیش نه بردیم و نه بُد هیچ خلل

زین پس جو نباشیم و همان خواهد بود *

Oh! stop, for we shall be no more and the world
will exist

Without our name and any trace of us;

Before this we did not exist and there was no
trouble,

After this, when we are no more, all will be as
it was

در سنگ زدم دوش سبزه کاشی

سر خوش بردم که کردم این او باشی *

دامن به ران حال میگفت سبزه

من چون تو زدم تو نیز چون من باشی *

Yesterday, I flung the jar, made in the city of
Kashi (Persia), on a stone (and thus broke it),
And I was delighted to have committed this
mischief :

The jar was saying to me with eloquent silence,
'I was once like thee ! Mayest thou also be like
me !'

آن قصر که با جرخ همی زد پهل
بر در که او شهران نهاندند رو
دیدیم که بر کنگره اش ناخته

آواز همی داد که کو کو کو کو *

The (majestic) palace rose up (with its domes
and minarets) to heaven,
And on its threshold kings bowed ;
We saw that a dove (sitting) on its parapet,
Cried aloud, 'Where, where, where, where ?'

FitzGerald translates it thus :—

The Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw,
And kings the forehead on his threshold drew
I saw the solitary Ringdove there,
And 'coo, coo, coo ;' she cried, and 'coo, coo, coo'.

Compare Anwari :—

چشم عبرت بین کشای جان شاهان را نگر
تا چسان از گردش گردون گردان شد خراب
برده داری میکند بر قصر قیصر عنکبوت
یوم بویست همی زبند بر گزند افراسیاب *

Open your lesson-accepting eyes and see the
 condition of kings,
 How it has fallen low by the revolutions of the
 revolving heaven:
 The spider has laid a curtain on Cæsar's palace
 with its web,
 (And) the owl hoots on Afrasiyâb's dome.

Compare 'Urff:—

عری چه بنشسته که یاران رفتند
 نازکبدان و کلعداران رفتند *
 چون بوی گل آمدند بر دوش صبا
 در زیر زمین چو آب باران رفتند *

O 'Urff, why art thou brooding over the loss of
 friends,
 On the death of the delicate-shaped and the rosy-
 cheeked:
 Oh! They came like the scent of rose riding on
 the shoulders of the breeze,
 And went beneath the earth like drops of pouring
 rain.

Again 'Khayyâm with more tender, passionate
 and pathetic feeling says:—

ابن کوزه چو من عاشق زار بوده است
 و اندر طلب روی نکار بوده است *
 این دسته که برگردن او می بینی
 دسته است که در گردن یار بوده است

This earthen-cup has been a lover like me,
 And has been seeking after a beloved's cheeks,
 This hand that thou seest on its neck,
 Is a hand that once clung round a sweetheart's
 neck.

Thus FitzGerald :—

I think the Vessel that with fugitive
 Articulation answer'd, once did live,
 And drink ; and Ah ! the passive Lip I kissed,
 How many Kisses might it take—and give !

Compare :—

پس مردن بنائے جائیگے ساغر مری گل کے
 لب جان بخش کے بوسے ملیں گے خاک میں مل کے *

Earthen cups will be made out of my clay on my
 death,
 (Thus) I will kiss after my death the lips that make
 life luscious.

Compare Mas'úd :—

میری مٹی کے بنوائے چراغ اوس نے جلانے کو
 بڑی مدت میں جاگے ہیں نصیب اس سوختہ دل کے *

The beloved has lamps made out of my clay to
 burn,
 The good luck of this burnt heart has waked up
 after a long long time.

This illustration, in a romantic style, of that
 stupendous and never-ending change, which prevails
 throughout the universe, refers to the transitional
 phenomena after death : but we, practically, observe

the prominent changes characterizing every moment of our lives. There is a change not only in our lives but also one noticeable in everything that we see, think or perceive. It is only that infinite Power, that Author of our being, who is the Changeless and the Eternal. Everything is subject to perpetual change. There is a regular movement in animate and in inanimate objects. All this change takes place every moment, although it is invisible to us and we look on it as non-existent. And to deny it would be 'as though we deliberately shut our eyes to reality.' Bergson says 'That which we call a 'state' is indeed itself a change, there is no essential difference between the passing from one state to another and the remaining which we call the same state. Transition is fluent, continuous, constant.'¹ Our eyes, our ears, our hands and everything in us, external or internal, is undergoing a regular change. There are changes in the life of a nation and a country. There is a change in rapid succession in what we call matter, atoms and electrons. There is, in short, nothing in this mortal world so natural as change, constant and uninterrupted.

ہر سترے کہ ہر کنار حوئے رُستست
 گوی رلب درشتہ حوئے رُستست *
 تا ہر سترے پا نہ حواری نہ ہی
 کُل سترے رجاک مہروئے رُستست *

¹ Bergson *An Account of his Life and Philosophy* p. 56

Every green herb that has grown on the side of a
stream
Has grown, as if from the lips of an angel-
natured (beauty),
(In order) that thou mayest not set thy foot on it
contemptuously,
I warn (thee) that it has grown from the clay of a
moon-faced beauty.

FitzGerald says :—

And this reviving Herb whose tender green
Fledges the River-lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly ! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen !

هر جا كه گله و لاله زارے ابود است

از سرخي خون شهرايارے بود است *

هر شاخ بنفشه كز زمين مي رويد

خالے است كه بزارخ نگارے بود است *

Where there has bloomed a rose and a tulip plot,
It has come into form from the redness of the
blood of a king ;
Every violet that grows from the earth,
Is a mole that once adorned a beauty's cheek.

FitzGerald says :—

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled ;
That every Hayacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

CHAPTER VII

WINE AND ITS PHILOSOPHY

LIKE Abu Nawás of Arabia, Khayyam was a passionate lover of wine. This Bacchus-loving poet of Persia makes frequent use of it in his verses with unsurpassed affection, fervour and devotion. The late Professor Shamsu'l-'Ulamá Maulana Shibli is of opinion that this is an evidence of the fact that he did certainly make use of wine and, if he had not been a Philosopher and a Doctor of science, his wine would have assumed the appearance of the mystic wine of Hafiz. Maulavi 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, the living author of *Al-Baramaka* and *Nizamu'l-Mulk*, is, however, of opinion that wine has been the general theme of oriental poets and, as Khayyam was also a poet, his quatrains were bound to refer to it, in order to give them a brighter and more congenial appearance. He further goes on to say that Khayyam's quatrains, at the first reading, lead one to think that he was really a great drunkard, because they are devoted like a lover to the saqi, the cup and the pitcher, and that they are hall-marked with an over whelming evidence of the longing for strong drink. But in the absence of corroborated

historical testimony to the fact, he does not feel inclined to look on Khayyâm as a drunkard merely on the wordings of his quatrains. In his opinion, Khayyâm with his unsurpassed erudition was a celebrated and virtuous Şúfî. He absolves him of the offence of drinking and regards his reference to wine as symbolic of the mystic spirit. Whinfield says: 'His constant exhortations to drink wine must not be taken too literally. A man who passed a life of study, and had mastered all the theology, the philosophy and the science of the time, could hardly have been the mere sot which a hasty reading of his bacchanalian effusions might lead one to suppose.'¹ Mr. Richard Le Gallienne says:² 'One interest of Omâr's existence I may perhaps claim to represent with a more proportionate fulness is love, and "women with langurous narcissus eyes." There are a considerably greater number of verses devoted to that pleasant subject in the original than one would gather from Fitzgerald; and though, after Oriental fashion, woman was mainly an interlude in Omar's life, a pet, a plaything, there are several quatrains which breathe quite a modern intensity of passion. That Omar sometimes made use of wine and women as symbols of his mystical philosophy is, doubtless, true; but

¹ *The Quatrains of Omar Khayyâm*, p. xlvi.

² *Rubâ'iyât of Omar Khayyâm*, p. xiv.

that he more often made a simpler use of them is, happily, still more certain, for Omar was, emphatically, a poet who found his ideal in the real.'

The charge against 'Umar Khayyam that he made use of wine and women is refuted by men of wide experience and extensive reading. In the words of Maulavi M. Barkatu'l-lah, we have a very sound argument in defence of Khayyam. 'But one acquainted with Şufi literature knows well that the first term stands for the Muse, which Socrates often used to invoke at the moment of introducing a difficult subject, and the second term for the inspiration of the Muse'¹ The terms alluded to here refer to Khayyam's devotion to the Sâqî and his love of wine. Mr. B. N. Nagarkar says. 'No doubt the vine that stands for wine is figuratively used. It might mean a wine cup, the feeding of a beggar, or a cosy room and comfortable clothes. It is certain it means something beside the intangible barren theories, which have ever furnished theologians and professors of a certain class with the pleasing occupation of splitting hairs and quibbling about the meaning of terms'

Dr. A. Neville J. Whyman writing on 'The Psychology of the Persian (Mystic) Philosopher'^{my} says² 'That a scholar, famed as a scientist of my of

¹ See Nagarkar *Introduction to Omar Khayyam* (ed

² *Islamic Review* July 1915

لب بر لب کوزه بُردم از غایت آرز
 تاز و طلبم واسطهٔ عمر دراز *
 لب بر لب من نهاد و میگفت براز
 می خور که بدین جهان نمی آئی باز *

With an intensity of desire I laid my lips on the
 lips of the earthen pot,
 To demand from it the medium of long life :
 It kept its lips on my lips and whispered to me
 confidentially,
 Drink wine for thou wilt not come back to this
 world.

FitzGerald translates its thus :—

Then to the Lip of this poor Earthen Urn
 I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn ;
 And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—'While you live,
 Drink !—for, once dead, you never shall return.'

من بے می ناب زیستن نتوانم
 بے جام کشیدهٔ بار تن نتوانم *
 من بندهٔ آن دم که ساقی گوید
 یک جام دگر بگیر و من نتوانم *

I cannot live without the scarlet wine,
 I cannot bear the burden of my own body without
 taking a cup,
 I am slave to that moment when the Sáqí urges,
 'Oh ! Take one more cup', and I am incapable of
 taking it.

مائیم خریدار می کهنه و نو
 و انگاه فروشده عالم ده دو جو *
 گهتی که پس از مرگ کجا خواهی رف
 می پیش من آرزو هر کجا خواهی رو *

We are the purchasers of wine, old and new,
 And we sell the world for a couple of barley corns,
 Oh ! thou who askest me, 'Where shall I go after
 death ?'

Get me wine and then go wherever it pleaseth
 thee to go

Look at this command 'go', at this antipathy, inebriety and audacity. A man, absorbed in religious thoughts, wants information regarding the day of judgment. He goes to Khayyam and asks him most anxiously and inquisitively, 'Pray sir, tell me, where shall I have to go after death' 'What have I to do with the place to which you go. My good fellow, bring wine, place it before me and then go wherever you wish to go,' responds Khayyám, without the least touch of affectation and whilst absorbed in his own effervescent thoughts after partaking of the mystic boisterous liquor. The poet's main object is that one should love God and not care for the life after death. He leaves it, like Átish, to God alone to send man to Heaven or to Hell as He chooses.

Átish says :—

اگر بخشے زہے رحمت نہ بخشے تو شکایت کیا
سر تسلیم خم ہی جو مزاج یار مین آئے * (آتش)

If He pardons, it is His compassion ; if He does
not pardon, there is no cause for complaint,
My head is bent with resignation to His will ;
The Beloved is Master of His will.

فصل گل و جوئبار و لب کشت
بایک دو سه اہل و لعبتے حور سرشت *
پیش آرقدح کہ بادۂ نوشان صبح
آسودہ ز مسجد ندو فارغ ز کزشت *

The season of roses, the side of flowing-water and
the (golden) fields,
One two or three capable friends and Hūrī-natured
loved ones,
Oh ! (these are with me, therefore) bring the cup,
for the morning drunkards,
Have had enough of the mosque and have done
away with the idol temple.

من مینخرم و ہر کہ چو من اہل بود
مے خوردن من بہ نزد او سہل بود *
می خوردن من حق بہ ازل می دانست
گر می نہ خورم علم خدا جہل بود *

I drink wine and whosoever is competent like myself,
 He thinks it is easy for me to drink it
 The Lord knew before the world began that I
 would drink it,
 So, if I do not drink it, God's fore-knowledge of
 me becomes wrong.

ناکے زائد حدیث و تاکے زارل
 ہنگام طرب شراب را نیست بدل *
 نگدشت رانداری من علم و عمل
 ہر مشکلی را شراب گرداند حل *

How long, will this talk be continued about eternity and time having no beginning ?
 There is no substitute or consideration for wine in rapturous moments,
 Knowledge and conduct of life have passed beyond my calculation.
 It is the wine that helps to solve every complex problem

This quatrain is a beautiful illustration of the condition of those devotees of God who are always found drunk with the mystic wine. It is this wine only which makes them absolutely indifferent to the pain, pleasure and sorrow of this world. Anything which is likely to disturb the peace of their minds is forgotten in the effects of this mystic wine. If there is anything that possibly can impart to them real pleasure and contentment, it is this rapturous absorption in the divine contemplation of what the

mystics call wine. They remain so absorbed in meditation and communion with the Creator, that they forget their own consciousness. They have no need of the outward religious injunctions which are imposed on man. And, honestly speaking, all forms of laws are applicable to those only who can form a rational judgment of the consequences of their acts. The acts of the mystics lie centred in one thing only, and that is in the deep love of God, which is their sole pleasure. A mystic, most profoundly engrossed in meditation and in the contemplation of the Deity, becomes unconscious of anything that surrounds him. The result is that he does not consider any of the problems concerned with the religious, domestic or mundane life. He loses all his faculties except those that draw a human being nearer to God, and in this meditation he realizes the fruitfulness of the spirit and the emotional pleasures of the soul. It is this uninterrupted and deep absorption in God which the supporters and advocates of modern civilization, have misnamed 'melancholia.'

در میخانه جز به می وضو نتوان کرد

وان نام که زشت شد نکو نتوان کرد *

خوش باش که این پرده مستوری ما

بدیده چنان شده که رفو نتوان کرد *

In a place where wine is sold and drunk, (ceremonial) ablution can only be made with wine,
 The name that has gained an evil notoriety cannot
 be converted into good,
 Be happy, for the curtain that hides our mysteries
 Is so badly torn that it cannot be mended

Here Khavyām alludes to those ascetics who have transgressed the limits of religion who do not observe any worldly or religious outward formalities. They adopt a mode of life with the sole intention of being shunned by others. And the very thought of being despised by others is their inward glory and triumph. They are simple and unassuming. They defy the prejudiced puritans, the social codes and conventional formalities which are of little value to them. The people try to use their oracular powers, they do all they can to win their favour and to pray for the realization of their worldly objects, for they believe from experience that whatever the ascetics speak about is sure to happen.

The poetical beauty of the quatrain lies in asking people to make the (ceremonial) ablution with the forbidden liquor and in the tavern. The next two lines congratulate such ascetics because, in spite of their intentional breach of the divine law imposed on the believers, people somehow or other begin to find out the truth that they are not the downcast and ordinary type of ascetics which they represent themselves to be, but are actually the lovers of God.

The second line attacks the 'Ulamá for considering that whomsoever they condemn can never be held to be virtuous in the eye of the divine law. It was, therefore, an integral part of their lives to visit a wine shop, to make ablutions with wine and so prove to the world that they preferred to belong to the excommunicated class.

The quatrain may also mean that the first essential to becoming a disciple of a devoted saint is to make one's heart capable of receiving mystic training. The heart must be cleansed with love. It must be the love of sincere and unaffected morality, and all those virtues that go to make a man what he should be, and when the task is finished, the disciple to his great satisfaction sees the spiritual light which the saint imparts. The disciple naturally will be alive to the sense of pleasure and enjoy the fresh vistas of spiritual thoughts this light imparts to him, for it is beyond his power to hide the spiritual force and happiness with which he is now inspired.

آمد سحرے ندا زمیخانه ما

کای رند خراباتی و دیوانه ما *

بر خیز که پر کنیم پیمانہ زمی

ز آن پیش که پر کنند پیمانہ ما *

One morning, a voice came forth from our tavern,
Oh! thou our madman indulging in things unlawful,
Get up, so that we may fill thy measure with wine,
Before they fill up our own measure (i.e. let us
drink wine before we die).

FitzGerald translates it thus :—

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted— Open then the Door!¹
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more.'

This quatrain gives us the priceless advice that we should do all we can to make our life sublime, before the call of death transports us to the next world. These precious words compel us to realize the usefulness of life. They convey to us the thought that 'life is not an empty dream,' but that it is meant for high and noble ideals and aspirations, that it is the extensive field where we can sow and cultivate the seeds of virtue, be serviceable to God and useful to man, can foster and nourish our souls, and later on reap the advantage in the life to come. They give us the suggestive impression that opportunities do not repeat themselves and that certainly they will never come after death. They bid us prepare ourselves with all earnestness and with nobility of purpose to do as much good to-day as lies within our reach. They teach us that, as a preparation for the next world, we should

enrich our mind and soul with lofty and tender thoughts and with noble emotions in one life. The quatrain also teaches us that, before our present life comes to an end, we should accumulate an inestimable store of goodness, wisdom and knowledge for a happy, prosperous and golden life to come. It teaches us that this life is not meant to be devoted to the exercise of brute force, to licentious indulgence, and to things leading to its waste and deplorable end. It suggests to us that we should brave the dangers of life, remove things that stand in the way of real success, defy the insurmountable barriers, avoid the temptations of the flesh; and last, but not the least of all, gather our golden harvest in the realization of the Deity with an ardent fervour and zeal. In a word we must do all we can for everything that is good, for this life is merely a preamble to the next one, and is the essence of that enrapturing, transcendent and sweetest love which we owe to the Eternal Existence, our Almighty, our God.

Khayyám has made certain suggestions about the use of wine, if it is taken in a literal sense. This may perhaps lead some to suppose that he did so use it. I cannot here discuss this question as it has been already decided. I cannot, however, refrain from asking my readers not to overlook the fact that he was an accomplished physician and a thoughtful philosopher-poet. As such he has laid

down a code of rules for the guidance of those who are victims to wine, or are forced by the environment of fashionable vices to use it. His warning notes clearly show that, influenced by the sense of high character, he has no respect for the loathsome drunkard. At the same time he prefers him to a hypocrite, who, under the garb of sacerdotal pretences, violates the rights of others and endeavours to spread the odour of his false sanctity and to rob others of whatsoever he can get. *Khayyám* attaches certain stipulations and restrictions to the use of strong drink. He starts with the question, 'Who may drink it?' Later on, he asks, 'How much and in whose company should it be used?' If the conditions he has imposed are strictly observed, then from his standpoint, none but the wise are eligible to use it. But the wise care not for it and dare not even touch it. Though certain advantages accrue from its use, yet the disadvantages are far more numerous. Human nature is frail and, as a natural consequence, if one is led by temptations to abuse it, then, if he is wise, he will come to abhor it. A drunkard cannot be expected to be the author of ideal and imperishable works of wisdom and in the words of Fowler,¹ 'A Byron, half-intoxicated, may indeed write *Don Juan* and like productions, and compose poetry mostly addressed to the

¹ *Self-culture* p 25

passions; but no one in this state ever wrote *Paradise Lost*, Thomson's *Seasons*, Locke on *The Human Understanding*, Brown's *Mental Philosophy*, or Edwards *On the Will*. Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, and others may be eloquent when partially intoxicated, yet their eloquence will be characterized by sarcasm, invective, denunciation, declamation, hyperbole, narration, and a remarkable flow of words, instead of by argument, profundity, or clear deductions from first principles.'

It would be almost impossible for a dissipated youth, or a man of ordinary character, to act upon Khayyām's teachings about the use of wine. His instructions are exclusively for those who have been led to the verge of ruin by the use of alcoholic drinks, who have lost their money, their energy, their talents, and their reputation as the natural result of taking wine; for those who have been newly initiated into the follies of drunkards and are marching on the road to ruin. It is an admitted fact that strong drink is the mother of all evils and is sure to lead astray by its use those who take it. If it is contended that Khayyām was an advocate of strong drink when he says: 'If I do not drink wine, it is an emblem of my rawness,' it may be explained that, keeping his mental reservations in view, it can only mean that it is better to sin in order to demonstrate the compassion of God. As a doctor and a philosopher and as a man of vast

experience it is certain that Khayyám was thoroughly conscious of the evil effects, and of the disadvantages of wine in their fullest detail. He cannot be expected to advocate its use.

Let us now proceed to see what Khayyám says :—

می گرچه حرام است ولی تا که خورد
آنکاه چه مقدار؟ و دیگر تا که خورد؟

هرگاه که این چهار شرط آید جمع
پس می نه خورد مردم دانای که خورد؟

Although wine is absolutely forbidden, but who may drink it?
In what quantity and with whom?

When these four conditions go together,
Then who else but a wise man should drink it?

Again he advises the drunkards thus —

کم کم خور و که که خور و تنها می خور
Take wine drop by drop, now and then and when
you are alone.

چون هشیارم طرب زمن پنهان است
ورمست شوم در خردم نقصان است *

حالی است میان مستی و هشیاری
من بده آنکه زندگانی آن است *

When I am conscious, I have no pleasure,
If I am intoxicated, I lose my senses.
There is a way between intoxication and consciousness;
I am slave to one who fashions his life like this.

The poet means to say that it is no good to be intoxicated with strong drink. It is not commendable even if one is not at all affected by it. He gives us the lesson of temperance in the exercise of earthly pleasures, however innocent they be.

Again he says :—

جون بادۀ خوري ز عقل بيگانه مشو
مدهوش مباش و جاهل را خانه مشو *
خواهي كه مي لعل حلاوت باشد
آزار كسي معجوي و دبروانه مشو *

If thou drinkest wine, keep control over thy senses,
Do not drink away thy senses and do not act like
the ignorant.

If thou desirest to make the scarlet wine lawful to
thyself,

Injure no one and do not be mad.

Again he says :—

گر بادۀ نمي خورم نشان خاسي است
ورنيز ددام عيinxورم بد نامي است *
مي شاه و حكيم و رند بايد كه خورد
ورزين است نه مخور كه دشمن گامي است *

If I do not drink wine, it is an emblem of my
callowness,

And if I always drink it, it will give me a bad name *;
It must be drunk by a king, a philosopher and a
Rind (irreligious ascetic),

If thou art not one of these three, do not drink it,
for it is an enemy of the object of thy life.

The use of wine is prohibited by Islam under all circumstances, whether it is used temperately or intemperately. And he who makes it lawful commits a great crime. But suppose two men come to you. One is good-natured, sincere, outspoken, honest and truthful, but he takes wine temperately. The other man is a thorough teetotaller. He says his prayers, keeps his fasts, but he is given to back-biting and calling others bad names. He speaks blasphemous words, contrives mischief, misappropriates trust property, and interprets religious injunctions to his own interests. Which of the two would you prefer? You should consider that those who do not drink spirituous liquor, but commit all sorts of evil, are more liable to be hated than one who merely drinks but is a good man. Khayyám addresses such hypocrites scornfully, for to him a man who drinks is far better than one who pretends to be good and honest, but is practically in his morals and actions a bad man.

He says —

تو بختی می کنی که من می نه دوری

صد کار کنی که منی غلام است او را *

*Thou boastest that thou art a teetotaller, and yet
thou committest a hundred evils to which wine
is a slave*

Khawja Hafiz has dealt with this delicate problem very cleverly.

فقيه مدرسه دي مست بود و فتوي داد

که مي حرام ولے به زمال اوقاف است *

The learned scholar of the school was drunk yesterday and he passed a ruling,
That wine, although it is forbidden, is better (to be used) than (the misappropriation of) trust property.

So far the meaning of Khayyám's quatrains on wine have been explained in a literal sense and bear the moral aspect of his teaching from a temporal point of view. Now we shall analyse it from a mystic standpoint. Islám forbids intemperance whether it is the result of intoxicating drinks or drugs. A man may legally enjoy the boons of the Creator, so far as they are allowed by the heavenly commandments, but he is not to transgress their limits. He is to be held responsible for breaking the bonds of temperance. He may do all he likes but he should not forget himself, and should always be governed by the overshadowing consciousness that whatever he does should be the fulfilment of the trust placed in him by God. For this life is nothing more than a trust, the obligations of which we have to perform with honest and sincere devotion. Khayyám in a poetical allusion acknowledges that there is a prohibition of wine, but he still questions the authority of the divine law with the words 'Who is entitled to drink wine'? It must

be borne in mind that the word wine is here used in its esoteric and not in its exoteric meaning. It is the mystic drink. It is the intoxication of the love of God. It is the never-failing medium of communion with God. All intoxicants are forbidden, except the intoxicant that leads the human soul into God's love. But even this intoxicant, if used intemperately, so as to cause utter oblivion of self, is likely to render a man incapable of performing his worldly duties, such as the maintenance of himself, the care of his legitimate wife and children and of those dependent on him, and the performance of the ritual and the ceremonies which are religiously incumbent on him. The poet, therefore, thinks that it is the paramount duty of man to take even mystic wine with caution and rationally, so as to discharge effectively the duties of life. He, therefore, proposes that one should, at least, use it in a small quantity, now and then, with relish and appreciation. Is it not a fact, which no lover of God can deny for a moment, that nothing can impart better pleasure and happiness to man than the contemplation of the Divine in a solitary place? Khayyam proposes the mystic use of wine in such a way that its effect would place man midway between intoxication and consciousness. He advises us not to be overcome by its intoxicating effects. He asks us not to drink away our senses, but to be rational and far sighted to be kind to others and

not to reek our vengeance upon them; not to act ignorantly and foolishly, but to strive to become enlightened. There are ascetics called *Majdhúbs*, who remain unconscious of anything but divine contemplation at each moment of life. Occasionally, being vexed by people who wish them to say something which will turn in their favour, they speak words which shape themselves into a sort of curse. This, in the poet's eye, is out-and-out ignorance and folly.

Again *Khayyám* alludes to the callowness of those who do not take the mystic wine. He thinks it a part and parcel of the lives of rulers, philosophers and *Rinds*¹ to taste without fail this sweet liquid of divine love. Every human being—whom God in His wise judgment has appointed to protect the lives of millions of subjects, to decide their fate, to shape their destiny, and be a shepherd to them—should be possessed of divine love, because, without this love, he cannot perform this arduous trust for which he has been divinely made responsible. To a philosopher this mystic drink is essential, because he is wise and every wise man should love his God. A *Rind* is at large to do whatever he likes; he breaks the bonds of worldly and religious formalities. He can drink the mystic wine, because he is not fettered by the responsibilities of this world and so is better entitled to use that mystic wine which means the Love of God.

¹ A *Rind* is a *Be-Shara* 'Darwish, one not bound by any law.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF IGNORANCE

PHILOSOPHY is the rational and systematic knowledge of all things. When we look at the universe and see things all around us, we naturally ask ourselves what these things are and how they come into existence. What process underlies their appearance? Who is their author? Are they single or complex? What are their properties? What their characteristics? Later on, we see things coming into shape either contemporaneously or one following the other. Then arises the question whether there is any specific mutual relation between these objects. Do they come together by accident? If there does exist a relation between them, how does it exist? What is their nature and why is it so? It is philosophy which is responsible for the answers. The question of foremost importance is this. Can we know the real and exact nature of all things? Philosophers have generally answered it in the affirmative. There are, however, philosophers in whose opinion it is impossible to know the nature of anything. Herbert Spencer observes¹

¹ Spencer, *Intuitions of the Mind* p. 399

that 'it is rigorously impossible to conceive that our knowledge is a knowledge of appearances only, without at the same time conceiving a reality of which they are appearances: for appearances without reality is unthinkable.' He says that 'besides definite consciousness there is an indefinite consciousness which cannot be formulated.' We gather from this that there are things the precise nature of which we can know, that there are things which are unknowable, and that 'the Power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable.' The German philosopher Schopenhauer¹ holds that to know the nature of things is next to impossible. Khayyám belongs to the same creed. In fact, we do not even know the things we believe we know. Take 'matter' for instance. If we think, not for the sake of thinking, but honestly and profoundly, we are bound to admit that our knowledge is very much confined, that we simply know certain properties and qualities of 'matter'. We know that it dissolves into particles or atoms the size of which can be definitely estimated. Again, these atoms are composed of corpuscles or electrons that are indissoluble. These possess motion, weight, power of resistance or impenetrability and certain other qualities called space and extension. Let us see what their nature is. How did they come into existence? Where do they come from? Their

¹ See *Sheru'l-Ajrum*, p. 219.

nature has not been known at all. For another instance take an apple. We think we know what it is. But what do we know of it? We simply know that it has a certain size, smell, colour and taste. Organism, smell, colour and taste are merely its qualities, called space and extension in the primitive knowledge of philosophy. None of them stands by itself a distinct thing from the body of the apple. The apple is only accounted as one distinct thing by these qualities being observed to go together. Otherwise we are quite unable to know the nature of an apple.

When we study things we apply the theory of cause and effect. It becomes incredible with the progress of investigation, and, at last, we know nothing about the cause. Everything that comes from above falls to the ground. The Greek philosophers thought that it was the result of the centripetal force and that the ground was the centre of these things. Sir Isaac Newton found the error out. He pointed out that there was gravity in all bodies, that the earth, being a large body, drew things smaller than itself. But nothing further has been known beyond the existence of gravity. Why does the so called gravity exist among bodies? The problem remains as unsolved as ever. We have at last, to profess that we have been able to know certain things and then we have to confess our absolute ignorance. We unveil a mystery, but it

begets another mystery. We unloose a knot only to find other knots waiting for us.

فلسفي سر حقيقت نه توانست كشود

كشت راز دگر آن راز كه افشائي كرد *

The philosopher could not unveil the mystery of reality,

The mystery he was going to explore, itself became another mystery.

Many far-sighted philosophers have at last agreed that their little knowledge, tantamount to ignorance, is the principle of all true philosophy. Socrates after his life-long experience was forced to confess that 'it became known to him that he knew nothing'; in other words he professed his relative knowledge, but confessed his absolute ignorance. Khayyám also confesses and preaches the doctrine of absolute ignorance.

كس مشكل اسرار ازل را نه كشاد

كس يكقدم از دائره بيرون نه نهاد *

چون بنگرم از مبتدي تا اوستاد

عجز است بدست هر كه از منادر راد

None did ever unveil the complex mysteries of eternity,

None ever transgressed the limits of the circle (i.e. human wisdom).

When I look from a tyro to an instructor,

(I find) whoever is born of woman is helpless.

اسرار ازل را نہ تو دانی و نہ من
 و نہ حرف معہ ن دو حجابی و نہ من *
 ہست از پس پردہ گفتگوئے من و تو
 حوں پردہ بر آفتد نہ دو مانی و نہ من *

The secrets of eternity are scrutable neither to thee
 nor to me,
 Neither thou nor I can decipher this enigmatical
 symbol,
 Thou and I talk to each other behind the curtain
 (of divine mystery),
 When the curtain is raised, neither thou nor I
 remain

Thus FitzGerald —

There was the Door to which I found no key,
 There was the Veil through which I might not see
 Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
 There was—and then no more of Thee and Me

By raising the curtain is meant the solution of
 unknown mysteries. If the curtain rises, man is
 likely to become aware of the secrets of eternity
 which has no beginning. The result of this would
 be that he would become mute and dumb with
 admiration, his lips would be sealed by God and he
 would become quite a different man. He would
 lose his intellect, or he would be overtaken with
 silence. 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Go
 down, charge the people, lest they break through
 unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish.'¹

Compare Khwāja Háfiz :—

حدیث از مطرب و می گو و راز دهر کمتر جو

که کس نکشود و نکشاید بحکمت این معمارا *

Speak of the singer and the wine, and seek little of
the mysteries of the world,

For no one has ever solved nor shall ever solve
this riddle through wisdom.

Compare the saying : ' Man 'ārafa rabbahu qalla
līshanuhu ', i.e. Whosoever discovereth his Lord,
becomes dumb.

آنها که محیط فضل و آداب شدند

در کشف دقیقه شمع اصحاب شدند *

ره زین شمس تاریک نه بردند برون

گفتند فسانه و در خواب شدند *

Those who have been men-of-letters and moralists,
And men of leading and light in solving complex
problems ;

They never led their way out of this dark night,
They narrated a romance and then slept.

آنها که جهان زیر قدم فرسودند

و اندر طلبش هر دو جهان پیمودند *

آگاه نمی شوم که ایشان هرگز

زین حال چنان که هست آگاه بودند *

Those who wandered the world over
And traversed both the worlds in His search ;
I get no information whatever that these ever
Knew the nature of things as it is.

قومے متعکد در مذهب و دین
 جمعے متعیرد در شک و یقین *
 ناگاه منادئے بر آند رکبیں
 کای بیخبران راہ بے آسب و نہ اس *

A community is involved in the cares of religion
 and faith (i. e. speculative science),
 A body is confounded in convictions and uncertain-
 ties,
 Suddenly the drum beater from his ambush springs,
 'O ignorant ones' neither that nor this is the road

FitzGerald translates it thus.—

Alike for those who for To day prepare,
 And those that after some To morrow stare,
 A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
 'Fools! Your Reward is neither Here nor There'

افسوس کہ سرمائے رکب برون شد
 در دست اجل بے حکمها خون شد *
 کس نامد اربن جہاں کہ تا پرسم ارو
 کاحوال مسافراں عالم چون شد ؟

Alas! the fortune went out of hand,
 The hand of death squeezed the blood out of many
 lives,
 Nobody returned from that world so that I could
 ask him,
 'What fate did the travellers of this world meet
 there?'

The poet says that no one has been able to find
 out exactly what fate a man meets after his death

No one who leaves this world for the next ever returns to tell us about those who have died. Khayyám expresses his absolute ignorance about the world to come. This may be treated as an indirect refutation of the facts which others have mentioned about life after death and about their certainty to attain to a certain rank of honour or salvation. No one can speak definitely about one's fate before or after one bids farewell to this mortal world.

بهر چند که رنگ و بوئے زیباست مرا .

* چون لاله رخ و چو سرو بالاست مرا *

معلوم نه شد که در طرب خانه خای

نقاش من از بهر چه آراست مرا *

Although my colour and odour are inviting,
My face is like the tulip and my stature cypress-
like,
I never knew for what in earth's pleasure-house
My artist decorates me for.

The poet is at a loss to understand the cause of the creation of the world. We see beautiful faces, attractive and graceful figures. They are not to live but to fade and die. He is puzzled on trying to find out the object of the Creator in bringing into form and life such beautiful beings in this world only to die in the end. After thorough

deliberation he arrives at the conclusion that no one but God knows the real secret of our existence

کس را پس پرده قصا راه نه شد
 و ر سر خدا هیچ کس آیه نه شد *
 هر کس ر قیاس حوش چیره 'مقدد
 معلوم نه گشت ر قصه کوتاه نه شد *

No one can find his way behind the curtain of
 Fate,
 No one can discover the secret of God,
 Everyone said something from his own ratiocina-
 tion,
 None could know anything and the romance conti-
 nued

دل سر حیات را نه می دانست
 نه موت هم اسرار الهی دانست *
 امروز که نا خودی بدانستی هیچ
 فردا که ر خود روی چه حقایق دانست *

The heart thoroughly knew the secret of life,
 And (it already) knew the secrets of God in death,
 To day when thou art with thyself, thou hast no
 thing known,
 What wilt thou know to morrow when thou leavest
 thyself

Thus FitzGerald says —

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
 Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
 You gaze To day, while You and You—how then
 To morrow, when You shall be You no more ?

Compare the closing words of Socrates : ¹ ' The hour to depart has come, for me to die, for you to live ; but which of us is going to a better state is unknown to every one except to God.'

Man thinks that his perceptions about the secrets of life are elaborate, and that his knowledge about death and the object of God in its introduction is complete. Khayyâm warns us that it is merely a deception which we experience in this life, owing to our misjudged calculations and badly-coined theories. We even do not know the real nature of things in our life, though we consider ourselves to be gifted with the freedom of the will, and with a capacity for thought and judgment, yet we cannot know what is to happen in the next life. It is nothing more than deception and open fraud we practise upon ourselves. Life as it is, is a problem which man, since the creation of the universe, has not been able to solve. To comment upon the mysteries of death and the next world is a very poor and unsatisfactory attempt.

Some of my readers may think that Khayyâm's philosophy is absolute ignorance, and that, therefore, all the ignorant and the fools are philosophers. This contention cannot be entertained. They told Socrates that he knew nothing and they also knew nothing, therefore no broad and intelligible

¹ Calderwood, *Moral Philosophy*, p. 261.

difference did exist between him and them. 'Herein lies the difference,' answered Socrates, 'I know that I know nothing and you do not even know that you know nothing.'

Knowledge is generally of two kinds: blind and rational. An ignorant man can discriminate between the sun and the moon and other different things of the universe as well as a philosopher can. But the one knows things blindly and the other rationally and systematically. A farmer knows the products of the earth, and so does a man well versed in the science of agriculture. But there is a remarkable distinction between their knowledge. Such is the case with ignorance. To a philosopher's mind the divine mysteries are as obvious, or as inscrutable, as they are to an ignorant person, but there is an intelligible difference between them.

Khayyām is proud of his ignorance and he asserts that every person cannot attain to this honourable stage of ignorance.

تو بے خبری بے خبری کار تو نیست

ہر بے خبرے را نہ رسد بے خبری *

Thou art unconscious, but this unconsciousness is
not meet for thee,
It is not every unconscious one who is entitled to
unconsciousness.

A certain poet has expressed the same idea thus :—

تا به جائے رسیده دانش من
که بدانم همین که نادانم *

My wisdom has reached a stage
That I know so far that I am ignorant.

Again Khayyám says :—

رفت دیدم نشسته بر خنکِ زمین
نه کفر و نه اسلام نه دنیاؤ نه دین *
نه حق نه حقیقت نه شریعت نه یقین
اندر دو جهان کرا برد زهرهٔ این *

I saw an irreligious ascetic sitting on (the horse of)
earth,
Neither heathenism nor Islám ; neither world nor
faith ;
Neither truth nor reality : neither the divine laws
nor certainty ;
Where in the two worlds is ' he to get power or
rank ?

We have nothing to do with the authenticity, truth or untruth of the philosophy of ignorance. We may, however, judge its consequences. The philosophy of ignorance is the very source and fountain-head of all kinds of investigations, observations, disclosures and modern researches. If we are once satisfied with our thorough conviction of

the knowledge of things, or, if we think that whatever we know, we have known it fully and without any doubt, then there remains no reason why we should continue our researches and observations. The philosophy of ignorance is practically our guiding light. It is this consciousness of ignorance that encourages us to take a step forward in the field of evolution. Whatever we know, we attribute it to our ignorance and proceed onward. Khayyam teaches us the 'philosophy of ignorance,' but at the same time persuades us to march onward to the discovery of new light and new realms of thought. He says —

گر ار پوئ شہوت ز ہوا خواہی روت
 ار من حدرت کہ ہے نواخواہی روت *
 بگر ہمہ کسی؟ و ار کہا آمدہ؟
 می دان کہ ہمہ می کمی؟ کیا خواہی روت *

If thou goest after licentiousness and pleasure seeking,
 Let me warn thee that thou wilt depart shipwrecked,
 Perceive, 'Who art thou?' and 'Wherefrom hast thou come,'
 Do know, 'What art thou doing?' and 'Where thou wilt go.'

Khayyám admonishes us to discover the most important problems of philosophy that are directly

concerned with the practical side of our life from the cradle to the grave. There are many divergences, several forms of schisms and creeds in almost every religion in the world. Let us confine our discussion to the Muslim one only, because Khayyám was a Muslim and his teachings and railleries began with them. There are innumerable creeds and sects among the Muḥammadans. They are said to be about seventy-three in number. What are their antagonistic problems? They are these.¹ Did God create the world intentionally or was it His invention only? Are the qualities of God a part and parcel of His Being, or are they apart from Him? Do they exist from eternity without a beginning, or are they only accīdental? Is the word of God allegorical, or are its meanings plain and confined to words only? These problems are above the intuition of the human mind. How can anybody know the qualities of God when His reality is inscrutable? In spite of this, each creed and sect believes that whatever it has dictated is definite and final. They go so far as to look down upon those who have a different opinion and call them ignorant, heretical, fool, atheist, damned, excommunicated and by many other names. Many sects and creeds have sprung up like the Mu'tazila, Qádiriyya, 'Ash'aríyya, Hanbili, Shí'a and the Sunnī.

¹ For a full account of these discussions, see Sell, *The Faith of Islām*, 4th ed., Madras, pp. 254-70.

They describe one another as lost for ever, as doomed and as infidels. Sometimes these frictions have led to remorseless bloodshed, and history bears testimony to this fact that Baghdad has been the centre of these strifes and its streets and roads were reddened with Muslim blood. What is all this but blind fanaticism? If the Muslims had acted on Khayyám's philosophical teachings, and had thought that these problems were above the human understanding, had treated their knowledge not as positive and final, had only believed in the existence of God and resorted to the real teachings of the Qur'an, they would never have worried themselves with the attempt to know things beyond their perception. There would have been no differences between them in religion during the last thirteen hundred years, no blood-shed, no strife and no civil wars, which have shattered the very foundations of the Faith. But such has been the case with other religions also and is equally lamentable. Háfiz has most significantly hinted at these differences —

یکے ار کدر می لاند دیگر طامات می ناند

* بیائین داورها را نه پیش داور اندازم *

The one derides the other for being a heretic, and the other

imposes upon others with his spiritual and mystic accomplishments,

Come here, we would place these claims to divinity before the Lord.

It is, therefore, that, in order to break the bonds of the Sharí'at (sacred law) and to evade the endless objections and taunts of the orthodox set, the mystics have adopted an absolutely different path, called Ṭaríqat or Ma'rifat. In this form of life, the Ma'rifat, they do not observe the outward formalities of religion, but prefer to remain absorbed in divine contemplation, in suffering hardships in life and in looking upon all these as priceless boons from the Beloved. They are, in fact, real seekers after truth. The stimulating notes of music may at any moment stir up their psychical element and transport them into a blissful situation called Ḥál or Kaifiyat, and may even make them cry, dance, reel, fall and rise up in quick succession, unconscious of the possible hurt occasioned to them by such a fall.¹ For in these notes of music they perceive those harmonious and rapturous gleanings of the Beloved, which they cannot explain but can enjoy their stirred-up passions with an indefinable pleasure and ecstasy. It is for such bliss that the poet 'Iráqi invokes the help of the Deity to show him the path traversed by Qalandars² (liberal Darvishes), for in the tenets of faith he sees only the recrudescence of religion.

¹ There are the Mauláawiyya Darvishes. See Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islám*, p. 46.

² For an account of the Qalandariyya Order, see Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islám*, pp. 48-9.

He says :—

صمارة قلندر سردار به من نمائی

که درار و دور بیدم ره و رسم پارسائی (عراقی)

O sweetheart ! if Thou couldst show me the
Qalandar's path !

For in the formalities of piety, I perceive something
lengthy and remotely connected.

CHAPTER IX

FREEDOM OF WILL AND NECESSITARIANISM

THESE two problems, important as they are, through equally delicate to handle are still as plain as broad day-light. The theory of necessitarianism is not and cannot be accepted by libertarians. To the latter the doctrine of fate seems unwelcome and evidently wrong, because a man cannot deceive himself by thinking that a certain act which he has done has not really been freely done by him; but because he did it, he did it owing to causes over which he had no control. An advocate of the freedom of the will considers the doing of an act to be the result of his own absolute and free will, and he deduces from this that man is independent of causes and that the causes are the result of his own actions, as the proverb says: 'Where there is a will, there is a way.' The other party contends that when an event is to take place, circumstances are bound to arise spontaneously and create causes which lead to the happening of such an event; that man is helpless and his volition as to the doing of a certain act has no value whatever and is

passive to these causes. It is not in the power of man to prevent such causes or make their existence impossible. But if causes are the bone of contention, whether they are the result of his free will or otherwise, the libertarians are themselves subject to such causes, which are the result of their frailty. They cannot do away with them, they cannot unyoke themselves from such causes. Such acts were naturally bound to take place.

The followers of necessitarianism have, however, one advantage. They always fear the punishment they may suffer in consequence of their immoral actions. They have, therefore, to face enormous difficulties in their life. They do all they can to abstain from acts of immorality or, at least, from violating the rights and interests of others. Although in the end they condemn themselves, they feel remorse and shame, shudder at the horrors of punishment for their wrongful acts, and thus indirectly for a moment revert to the theory of the freedom of the will, but, at length, they console themselves with the thought that God's will must be done. As to punishment, both the parties may fear it, more or less, with the difference that the libertarians are fully conscious of their wrong doings, they confess their guilt and are ready to take such punishment as may be meted out to them, whilst the believers in necessitarianism seek shelter in the belief in events which took

place that were bound to happen. As Firdausí says :—

بد و نیک هر دوز یزدان بود

The followers of the freedom of the will are filled with Goethe's romanticism and those of necessitarianism possess the naturalism of Lucretius, the brother-mason of Democritus, of Epicurus, of Khayyám and of Oscar Wilde.

When man takes the natural forces and worldly occurrences into serious consideration and reflects with all his mental powers on the real nature of things, he naturally arrives at the ultimate conclusion that he is to a great extent a helpless creature, and so cannot contend against the phenomena of nature, or in other words the settled laws of God. He finds himself quite powerless, inasmuch as he cannot do away with the most ordinary requirements of his life. The whole world is a living evidence to him that there is one Prime Mover, one who administers the affairs of the world, that whatever takes place in it is the result of His will and power. When this and other analogous thoughts overpower him with their obvious truth, he is forced to believe that man's exertions, his powers and faculties are limited and that everything in the world has for its fountain-head the Great Supreme Lord of all the universe. Such was the case with Khayyám who attributed everything to the wonderful and infinite

power of God and looked upon man as a humble and helpless being

The advocates of the freedom of the will think that God has endowed them with the power to do or avoid a certain act, and so man is absolutely free and independent and can do whatever he likes. But there is in this a very fatal mistake. Man has actually no control over the doing of things which he can apparently do. Circumstances arise and he becomes powerless to do what he intends to do, or what he can do and eventually he becomes a thorough fatalist. But it must be borne in mind that this does not relieve a man from the performance of his duties and obligations. The problem may be solved in the words, 'do your duty and leave the rest to God,' for the frailty of human nature is an admitted fact.

A careful study of the scriptures of different religions of the ancient and modern nations, and of philosophers, and of the laws of nature and the different sciences shows that all tend to demonstrate more or less the helplessness of man. Freedom of the will has its own limitations and is incapable of a wide extension. The ancient Rishis of India, contemplating, with serious, sublime and dignified earnestness in the green jungles, by the banks of sacred rivers and on the summits of mountains, arrived at the definite conclusion that Karma or the destiny of man was the shadow of his past life.

They at the same time preached the gospel of good acts, asking the thoughtful man and the ignorant alike to observe and perform only what is righteous. The Hindus and all the ancient nations had a firm belief in astronomy and astrology, watching with serene patience the starlit nights and scanning with ceaseless toil the movements of the different planets supposed to affect their destiny. Buddha, the enlightened, is at one with the doctrine of fatalism, though he admonishes his followers to believe that man is free to act upon the injunctions of his religion.

The Christian Gospels teach men that the very hairs of their heads are all numbered, that no sparrow can fall on the ground without God's will, that no man can come unto him (Christ), except that were given unto him by God; that by grace they are saved through faith; and that not of themselves for it is the gift of God; that it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Along with such expressions, supporting the doctrine of necessitarianism, the Christian Testament exhorted men to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling: and to lay not up for themselves treasures upon earth but to lay up for themselves treasures in heaven. But Christ said that he acted and spoke as directed and ordained by God. The Jewish Testament enjoined upon its followers the strictest observance of the

holy commandments, which suggests the power of free-will and at the same time record facts to shew the weakness and incapacity of man

Zoraster wanted the human race to make a rational use of their faculties and to choose the good or the evil spirit, but could not refrain from advising the selection of the good spirit

The last, and not the least of all, Islám has in a repetition of divine commandments enjoined its followers to do good, to gain the favour of God by righteousness, to detest the mean pleasures of the world and to treat it as a dungeon and to look upon it as a dead dog. The Qur'án¹ says that those who became believers and performed good acts shall be entitled to Paradise and their rights shall not be at all violated. The Prophet in clear words asks his followers to bear in mind the remarkable words that the love of the world is the root of all vices. The Prophet advises us to do worldly duties in such a way, as if we should never die, and to be as diligent in divine works as if we were to die the next day. With every good intention, it is also said that 'the world is a sweet and propitious place, scatter yourselves on the face of the earth and utilize the benefits of God's boon, i.e., seek your livelihood. The 'bazzars are the table cloth of God, whoever wills to go there will get reward. Whoever

¹ Suratu I Baqara (ii) 59

rightly seeks the world to avoid degeneration, to maintain wife and children, to do a kind act to his neighbour, he is bound to see God with his face shining with the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night.' There are many commandments of God in the Qur'án and in the sayings of the Prophet (aḥádith) on morals and on the performance of man's daily duties, which all prove that man has been gifted with the freedom of the will so far as he is commanded to do certain things. But at the same time it is clearly and emphatically stated that not a particle can move without God's command. In fact the teachings of the Qur'án-i-Sharíf lead one towards freedom of the will, but no Muslim can ever boast that good acts have been done by him without the help and mercy of God. Islámic injunctions give fullest scope for freedom of the will, but subject to the thought that only God's will and mercy can help man in the realization of his hopes. Every promise is, however, given to man in connection with the fruition of his hopes provided he works honestly and conscientiously.

On this subject there have been two well-defined schools of thought in Islám: the Jabaríans, who deny all free agency in man: the Qadaríans, who deny al-qadr, or God's absolute decree, and assert that man is a free agent, The Mu'tazilís agreed with them. The Ash'arians seem to take a middle view. They say that when a man desires to do a certain

thing, the action corresponding to it is created by God, so it seems as if the action came from man, but it does not. This action is called *Kasb*¹ They are practically *Jabarians*²

The Arab poet Ma'arri takes up a middle position. He says —

And touching my creed, if men shall ask, 'tis but
 fear devout
 Of Allah nor freedom I uphold nor necessity
 Do not be a Necessitarian or a Libertarian,
 But endeavour to take up a position midway
 between them³

However, man's free will is limited and every religion bears testimony to this fact. It is a strange fact that the East embraces fatalism to a greater degree than Modern Europe. The latter is practically acting upon the injunctions of Islām to try, try and try and to depend for success on God.

It is naturally the earnest desire of man to monopolize all good advantages to himself, but he cannot do so. He breaks a thing which he would preserve with most ardent intentions. We look upon a certain act as good, but we do not do it. We wish we could avoid the commission of a

¹ For a full account, see Sell *The Faith of Islām* 4th ed. pp. 252-330-6.

² The Ash'arians quoted on their side Suras xliii 22 xxxviii 56 lvi 49 vi 150 vi 30. The Mu'tazilis quoted Suras liii 32 xl 43 vi 149 iv 81 and so on. It thus appears that much may be said on both sides.

³ Nicholson *Studies in Islāmic Poetry* p. 163.

certain act, but we cannot avoid it. The fact is that man has been gifted with numerous faculties of good and evil, and has been provided with the light of conscience to distinguish between good and bad; but at every step there are so many temptations that he yields to them and forgets to tread the right path. The world is a place of trial. And for this trial the good and the evil stand to test the will of man who is generally weak. If a man does his work successfully he boasts of his free-will, courage and patience: if he fails, he attributes it to qismat, providence and fate. If it were in man's power, he would never grow old, never die. He would turn everything to his own advantage and never suffer from want and adversity. The rich and the powerful would monopolize everything to their own advantage. Only the learned and the wise would lead a life of affluence. The poor and the ignorant would die with starvation. The more powerful would subdue the weaker nations. But truth, or God's government, always prevails and it has for its fountain-head God the Almighty.

Though Khayyám is a fatalist, he still insists on our exercising the freedom of the will and bids us create optimism out of pessimism and earnestly desires his readers to eat, drink and be merry, as far as it lies within their legitimate power. But taking a broader and more comprehensive view and arriving at short, terse and positive conclusions,

he steps back 'into this sorry scheme of things,
into this Magic Shadow-Show' —

Play'd in a Box whose candle is the Sun
Round which we phantom Figures come and go .

Mr. A S Wadia says ¹ 'It is when we calmly face the inevitable fact of the real helplessness of men before the inexorable forces of nature that the sublime pessimism of 'Umar Khayyam sinks deep into our heart and strikes a responsive chord there. Old Khayyam was not the first, as certainly he was not the last, to recognize courageously and proclaim unequivocally this most unwelcome fact. Solomon of old once and for ever took up the wail of oppressed humanity when he said 'I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit' ² and Plato moaned that, if death were a dreamless sleep, it would be indeed a wonderful gain. Job thought with 'Umar that our days upon earth are a shadow, and so did the great English bard —

Life's but a walking shadow—a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing' ³

Even to Kant life meant 'a perpetual contest with sheer hardships—a trial time—wherein most

¹ *Fate and Free Will*, pp 129-30

Ecclesiastes ii 14

³ *Macbeth* v 5

succumb, and in which even the best does not rejoice in his life'; and Schöpenhauer was so tired of the daily grind that he sighed for that thrice-blessed day when, 'rising above the petty, meaningless routine of joys and toils of an earthly creature, he would be absorbed into the vast bosom of an ever-peaceful Nirvana.'

As Khayyám was a learned Musalman, in the solution of these two complicated doctrines we have to judge him exclusively from the religious standpoint. It is a religious belief of the Muslims that whatever has happened, does happen and will happen in the world, is the result of God's commands. Everything that a man meets in this life has been already decreed by God before the world was made, 'Whatever was to take place has been written.' Háfiz says:—

دیدمش خرم و خندان قدح باده بدست
و ندران آئینه صد گونه تماشا می کرد *
گفتم این جام جهان بین به تو کی داد حکیم
گفت آن روز که این گنبد مینا می کرد *

I saw him one day happy and laughing, carrying
a cup of wine,
And in that mirror (i.e. the cup) there played a
hundred things;
I said, 'Look at this mirror of the world, when did
the Wise give it to thee,'
'That day when He made this crystal dome (i.e.
sky)', was the reply.

Muslims believe, in so far as it has been decreed, that a certain man will go to Hell and a certain man to Heaven. Accordingly Khayyám says —

ای آنکه مرا ز خاک برداشته
از لطف و عطای خویش ادراشته *
بگذر سر حرم من و خرده مغیر
می رویم از آن سان که توام کاشته *

O Thou, who hast created me from clay,
Hast honoured me out of Thy love and kindness,
Give up the thought of my crime and do not take
me to task,
I grow just as Thou hast sown me

The poet Ma'arri says —

ان كان فعل الكبائر مجبراً * ببقائه ظلم علي ما يفعل

If criminals are fated,
'Tis wrong to punish crime,

It was this belief that caused the Muslims to become backward in worldly affairs and to neglect their duties, as enjoined by the law of the Faith. They treated fate and will as two great divergent factors. I cannot deny the fact that it is indispensable for a Muslim to believe that the commonest and the most ordinary of things are regulated by God's commands. I do admit the fact that God knew everything from eternity : everything that had to happen till the endless future, as the Qur'an

says :¹ ‘ Nothing is concealed from it in the heavens or earths, be it a tiny particle or anything larger and smaller than it. Everything is embodied in the revealed book.’ I cannot infer from it that this liberates us from the penalty or reward of our actions. It is a very serious and dangerous mistake to interpret necessitarianism as it is usually done. The objections raised against this belief have given rise to a wrong interpretation of the problem. The fact is that man is neither free to do whatever he likes, nor is he bound by restrictions, so as to be utterly helpless in the performance of his duties and thus to be absolved from the consequences of his acts. It may be stated that he is helpless as far as independent or natural forces are concerned and over which he has no control. He is powerless against disease, health, wealth, adversity, wisdom, folly, sorrow and pleasure. It may be said that disease and health depend upon the observance and the upkeep of the laws of hygiene; that wealth and adversity depend upon the wise or foolish dealings in business; that the acquirement of knowledge is the result of study and hard work; that sorrows and pleasures are the outcome of the varying moods of mind and, in fact, that these and other kindred things are within the power of man. But we cannot admit it, not because we believe in

¹ *Sûratu's-Sabâ* (xxxiv) 3.

fate, but because the modern revelations of science and the theory of evolution compel us to adopt a different view. The theory of evolution proves that a man inherits faculties from his forefathers. He cannot change his peculiarities for he cannot alter his parentage. Whatever education and training imparts to man affects him in proportion to the natural faculties inherent in him. The facial expression of men, their character and all their physical, mental and moral faculties demonstrate this fact. Now, the libertarians may be asked where their freedom of the will exists. How can man withstand the forces of nature? The wind carries a tiny particle of sand in whatever direction it likes to carry it. A piece of straw is carried by the surging waves in a wayward direction. All the statesmen of the world, literary men and philosophers and persons in other and different professions owe their source of information to their predecessors. All the customs of the world had their foundation-stone laid in the past, on the basis of past events and facts. Science is shewing to the world what Islam had proclaimed to it thirteen hundred years ago.

But this is the one side of the picture depicting the helplessness of man. Now see the other side also. We cannot be held helpless by merely representing ourselves as overcome by our environments and causes, which we term insurmountable difficulties and barriers. We have been endowed

with faculties and innate powers to utilize such surroundings and causes to our advantage, if not to a considerable yet to a certain extent. We have accordingly been directed to make ourselves good and useful to others to the best of our power. And we shall be held accountable for our deficiencies, if it actually lies in our power to make them up. It is by no means binding on man to commit theft because he is poor. Men cannot change their characteristics nor overcome their environments. They will not be taken, therefore, to task for their actions. On the contrary, man has freedom of the will though with certain limitations. He must explain his conduct in so far as he is responsible for his illegal omissions and commissions.

The main objection against the libertarians is that whatever happens, happens by God's will and therefore the fatalists are not answerable for their acts. In other words, whatever wrong or calamity has befallen them, it has been caused by God. God has fixed the laws of nature. All objects are governed by the rules of gravity. Contraction and expansion are the results of heat and cold. All the physical forces in the world are governed by laws of nature. God in the Qur'án says:¹ 'Examine your drinking water. Have you brought it down from clouds or I? If I had willed it, its flavour

¹ Súratu'l-Waqi'a (lvi) 67-71.

would have become saltish. Why don't you thank Me for it? See the fire you burn. Are you its author or I? Have you planted its tree or I?' This is a material instance. All material, moral, psychological, ontological and metaphysical laws are fixed and governed by God. No change can take place in such laws. The fact that 'Whatever happens is ordained by God' means that things are governed by the laws of nature fixed by God and He is the Prime Mover of all forces. The Islámic teachings are expressly, abridged thus: 'Thou shalt not find alteration in the laws of God.' Recent scientific discoveries corroborate this statement. It is a great favour of God to inform us of His commands through proper channels. Physicist and materialistic information has been gathered by the ceaseless discoveries of investigation and researches, and the moral and spiritual training has been given us through God's messengers or prophets. There is a harmony between these two forms of institutions. Things of vital importance to the conduct of our lives were already brought to our knowledge before scientific researches began. Gradually the harmony between these two forms of teaching grew with such intensity that they all became one as shewn in the following verses of the Qur'án ¹ 'To-day We have completed your religion

¹ Súrata'l-Má'ida (v) 5.

for you and accomplished Our boon on you and approved Islám for you as (your) religion.' Again the Qur'án-i-Majíd is more lucid on the subject in discussion. It says: 'Verily We have shown to man the right path, now it lies with him to be thankful or ungrateful.'¹ It is an acknowledged fact that God's commandments cannot undergo any alteration in spirit, or, in other words, what you call evil is the breach of natural laws. As to good and evil the Qur'án clearly says: ² 'Whatever good is caused to you, it comes from God; and whatever evil you experience is caused by your evil desires.' Man has been given full powers to obey or reject the commandments of God. If he obeys them, he makes use of the freedom of the will. It is only by this gift—i.e. the freedom of the will—that man is religiously held responsible for his actions. Religion does not hold man responsible for things over which he has no control. 'God does not impose hardships on any one beyond one's capacity, and no sustainer of burdens sustains the burdens of others.'³ We may most safely infer from this that God is not unjust to His creatures: that He expects people to do what they can practically perform.

Now to the question, 'Whatever happens, it comes from God.' On this point the Qur'án expli-

¹ Súratu'l-Qaṣaṣ (xxviii) 5-6.

² Súratu'n-Nisá' (iv) 81.

³ Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) 286.

cally says 'Allah knows what is before and behind them' ¹ But this certainly does not mean that God had intentionally laid upon us the burden of things which are beyond our control. It would be an impious accusation against God to think so. God certainly knows what we have to do. This does not mean that it was so ordained by Him that we should do such acts. He in His infinite and most wise judgment, has been gracious enough to say 'Every one is at liberty either to be a believer or prove himself ungrateful'. A teacher does his best to teach all his students alike, and he knows full well from experience that a certain student will pass or fail at the examination. In the same way God knows perfectly well what we shall do in the future, but the blame of doing, or avoiding the performance of acts does not fall on Almighty God. There are certain roads leading to a particular destination: this is the case with different men treading different paths to reach their goal. God knows full well what paths we shall traverse but He does not force us to traverse a special path. He has given us full liberty of action in this respect and leaves us to choose between good and evil. 'If He wished He could have shown every one the right path' says the Qur'án. This implies that God has given us full liberty of action and the

¹ Súratu l Baqara () 253

² Suratu l Kahf (xvi.) 28

exercise of the freedom of the will to tread or avoid the right path and to choose between good and evil. He has left it entirely to our discretion to do or not to do a certain thing. Just take the instance of animals. They will not be held responsible for their acts. Why? Because they have been given a limited instinct. The case with man is absolutely different. God has given us wisdom and conscience. He has drawn a line of demarcation between good and evil for our guidance, and, lastly, He has given us the power of doing, or not doing, certain things which He has imposed on us to do as our duty and from which we cannot shrink back. So far this is the explanation of the doctrine of the freedom of the will.

Now as to religion and necessitarianism, it may be asserted that it was quite absurd to put faith in fate, when there were so many complications attached to it and when so many misunderstandings generally arise out of it. Man cannot but believe in fate. The first and foremost apprehension in rejecting the doctrine of fate lies in the fact that it may give rise to the belief that man is the sole author of his actions and that the existence of God is a mere fancy. It is an acknowledged fact that God is the Prime Mover of all things, and He knows full well about things that are to take place. Apart from it, fate is the only doctrine which gives us strength and consolation in our lives and makes

us feel, at every moment in life, that there exists a Prime Mover of all things, whom we call Allah, God, Jehovah, Jove, Lord, Brahma or Yezdân. We are always sensible of His omnipresence. We feel that the commission of an evil act is seen by Him. It is the consciousness of His being present everywhere which makes us keep aloof from the commission of evil acts. It is a different thing, if these sufferings and calamities of life are the result of a man's own doing, or are caused by his fellow-creatures or are the fruit of his breach of the laws of nature, or the consequence of disobedience to God. It is not philosophy or science but only the realization of the Deity that prove a source of consolation to us. Even wisdom cannot serve us in the hour of need and calamity although we regulate our lives by it. It is only religion which helps us at this critical juncture and teaches us to resign ourselves entirely to His will. The idea that whatever takes place in this material world emanates from the All Powerful God imparts to us the greatest possible relief, for then we believe that our sorrows and calamities have come from Him, who is the best judge of events and who is our real well-wisher. This faith only comes to our rescue when the wisdom of the world proves an absolute failure.

Islâm does not allow us to neglect our present and future life and to leave it altogether to fate.

We are required to exert our energies and resources to the full. It is true that what has already been predestined is bound to take place; but of that we have no knowledge. Our fate is a blank page to us. We are bound, therefore, to do all that we can to make our lives successful and leave the result to God's will. We are bound to preserve ourselves from falling into the labyrinth of evil and to pray God fervently for our betterment and prosperity. It is for such an occasion that God says: 'O God forgive us our sins: conceal our evils: and end our life with the good.'¹ It must be borne in mind that Islám does not tolerate neglect in the performance of our duties; it enjoins on us to act to the best of our ability. If the teachings of Islám had meant that free will should not be made use of, because everything is predestinated, the very first object of the revelation of the Holy Books and the advent of the Prophets from time to time in the world would have been defeated. Throughout the text of the Qur'án the non-Muslims have been reproached for making this statement: 'We have always found our forefathers doing this and we follow in their footsteps.' In response to this, God has commanded His people to make use of their wisdom and to be rational. It could never be expected from a rationalistic religion like Islám,

¹ Súratu Áli 'Imrán (iii) 192.

which allows thorough toleration to mankind about the conducting of their affairs, to preach that one should shrink from one's duty, that one should not make use of one's common sense and conscience and should lead an animal life.

We cannot deny the fact that God in the Qur'an-i-Sharif has in many passages described Himself to be the sole cause of things, but this does not convey to us the meaning that He has absolved us from the exercise of those faculties, which He Himself in His wise and sagacious judgment has granted to us. God cannot be held responsible for our evil deeds. If such were the case, the different religions and the laws of different nations and countries would become absolutely null and void, and man under the circumstances would be bound to lead the life of brutes. So far it is certain that man's free will is limited, and He only, the Creator of the whole universe, is the cause of all effects. He only is the author of everything.

Now to Khayyám. I am strongly of opinion that Khayyám as a Muslim had no right to criticise or question the acts of God in his quatrains; but his motives should be carefully analysed, for he is never irreverent and he simply endeavours to prove the weakness of human nature. His views are a lover's complaint, in making which he is quite justified as a seeker after truth. He has exposed the surrounding temptations that beset man in the performance

of good acts. And as God is the Prime Mover or Force of all things, Khayyám is so sensible of his weakness and inability that he has humiliated himself as best he can before God, and complains to Him in good faith like a loving devotee and seeker after truth. His last words in his dying moments, referring to his search after God, bear ample testimony to the fact that he did repose his confidence to a certain extent in the exercise of free will; but he attached little importance to it as compared with the predetermination of God. I do emphatically request my readers not to overlook his dying declaration, if dying statements have any legal value at all. To me they are the essence of the whole life of a man.

بر رهگذرم هزار جا دام نهی

گوئی که بگیرمت اگر گام نهی *

یک ذره ز حکم تو جهان خالی نیست

حکم تو کنی و عاصیم نام نهی *

Thou placest a thousand traps in my way,
And warnest me to be doomed, if I ever tread on
them,

No atom in the world can move without Thy order,
Thy own will is done, and still Thou rebukest me
for being a sinner.

FitzGerald translates it thus —

'Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gun
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!'

The contents of this quatrain should not lead its readers to think that they are at liberty to do whatever they like, ultimately laying the whole burden of their actions on God. Man's conscience is the best guide. And anything against the judgment of conscience should be treated as a pitfall. It rests with human beings either to fall in this snare or pit, or to fall back from the danger, and either to keep aloof from temptations or surrender to them. The turning-point at this critical juncture in man's life either leads to the royal road to success and virtue, or to the dangerous abyss of vice and failure. Certainly, everything depends upon the Almighty God and nothing can move without His command, but the divine laws of different religions bear ample testimony to the fact that man has also been empowered by God with a will to carve out his own destiny, able to commit evil actions or be a doer of good deeds. In the words of Samuel Smiles 'Heaven helps those who help themselves'. For, man should not permit himself to think for a moment that he can, independently of God, do good deeds. If he does he should remember the well-known proverb, 'Pride filleth before destruction'.

If he rejects this proverb and depends absolutely on his own goodness, he is sure to fall and make himself liable to omissions and commissions against divine law. We are forced by experience to lay it down that man should make the best use of his conscience by constancy and virtue, and act with thorough reliance on God's help, because man is always subject to error. It is, however, a matter of paramount necessity not to weaken one's conscience; but rather to nourish and foster it with care, attention and promptitude and so strengthen it against the blinding and deadening forces of the universe.

Cassius tulissima virtus. Virtue is the safest shield. And brave is he who exercises self-control. *Audaces fortuna jurat.* Fortune follows the brave.

ایزد چو نه خواست آنچه من خواسته ام
 کے گرد راست آنچه من خواسته ام
 گر هست صواب آنچه او خواسته است

بس جمله خطا است آنچه من خواسته ام *

When God did not like what I have desired,
 How can that be set right what I have desired ;
 If it is good whatever He has willed,
 So it is all a fault whatever I have desired.

نقشه است کہ بر وجود ما ریختہ
 صد بوالعجبی ز ما بر انگیختہ *
 من زان بہ ازین نمی توانم بودن
 کز بوتہ چنین مرا فرو ریختہ *

It is an impression that Thou hast cast on our
existence,
Thou hast originated a hundred wonders from us ;
So I could not have been otherwise, but
What Thou hast turned me out of the crueble
such as I am.

ار آب و کلم سرشته من چه کنم

* دین بستم قص تو رشته من چه کنم *

هر نیک و بدی که از من آید نه وجود

تو بر سر من نوشته من چه کنم *

Thou hast moulded me from water and clay, what
can I do ?

It is Thou, who hast stiched the fibres of this reed,
what can I do ?

Every good and evil that emanates from me
Thou hast recorded it on my forehead, what can
I do ?

Mr. Wadia who is thoroughly at one with 'Umar
Khayyám says : ' ' By Fate, on the other hand,
I understand a belief that the order of things is
unalterably fixed and established from the begin-
ning of Creation once and for ever, and that no
power we know of, human or divine, can hasten,
stay or retard even by a second this predetermined
succession of events, or deviate by a hair's breadth

its fixed line of direction. To put in the words of 'Umar of old :—

When Earth's first clay They did the last Man's
knead,
And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed :
Yea, the first Morn of Creation wrote,
What the Last Eve of Reckoning shall read.

FitzGerald translates it thus :—

'Tis all a chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for pieces plays ;
Hither and thither moves, and mates and plays
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

Again Mr. Wadia says : ' Oppressed with the crushing sense of the helplessness of humanity, 'Umar Khayyám refused to admit the responsibility for his acts. To him the so-called sins of men were not crimes for which they should be judged and condemned, but weakness inherent in their very being and beyond their power to prevent or overcome. He felt for his fellow-creature as few have felt for him. He knew him as few have known him. He knew that man could not separate himself from all the rest of nature and that the rules and conditions of his being were as fixed and as unalterable as the procession of the stars and the succession of the seasons. If we for the nonce, leaving aside our righteous sense of indignation, patiently feel for those secret stops that give rise to sins and crimes, we should realize how perfectly the clairvoyant eyes of old Khayyám have penetrated into the heart of things.'

Mr Wadia has done full justice to Khayyam. I also agree with him, so far as holding that man is incapable of doing or avoiding things beyond his control. If man is capable of removing certain barriers or incapable of subduing certain forces, he is either responsible or irresponsible for his omissions and commissions. Just as the laws of nature are fixed, so are the laws in connection with man also fixed. There must be an intelligent difference between man and the remaining creation of God otherwise man has no right to be called the best and the noblest of God's creations. He has been gifted with wisdom and conscience mainly to do or not to do certain things. Temptations have, however, been purposely placed in his way and evil desires (*Nafs i ammará*) have found a place in his nature, and, on most occasions, in private or in public, he falls a victim to them. These temptations or evil desires are the medium of his test. It is within the power of man to develop or not to develop good or evil desires. He has been given the choice of good. If he was not so made as to discriminate between good and evil, the consciousness of these two important things would have had no value at all and there would be actually no line of demarcation drawn between them. If no man is held responsible and accountable for his actions, all the laws of the different nations and countries, religious or temporal, are worthless and useless and

their very foundations will be so badly shattered as to leave no chance of re-instating them in their right place. There is no criminal law in the world which does not provide for certain exceptions. The object of these exceptions is to exclude only those from the operation of law, who are of immature age, whose sense of distinction between good and bad is not developed, who are insane and devoid of that common sense which enables them to form a rational judgment of the consequences of their acts, or who are entitled to violate the prevalent laws under certain conditions in good faith, such as the defence of private person and property. In the same way, the laws of the different religions are also based on the same principles. Only those are held responsible for their conduct who have the capacity of such law being applied to them. For instance, no lunatic is liable to have to undergo any term of imprisonment, or to have a fine levied on him, or to be held religiously responsible for his conduct. Such a man is civilly dead. The Hindu law goes so far as to treat an ascetic also as if he had met a civil death. Only those provisions are made for a lunatic, which protect society from his encroachments, and he is placed in a lunatic asylum so that his mental disease may be cured. The provisions of different religions prove the fact that man is answerable for his conduct or, in other words, he has to exercise his freedom of will within a

circumscribed area within his mental and physical jurisdiction. All religions are considered divine institutions and all of them, more or less, are provided with civil and criminal provisions, promising man either the inestimable gifts of the Creator in Paradise, or threatening him with the everlasting and perpetual torments of Hell. Religions which do not embrace the conception of Paradise and Hell have their own synonyms or substitutes, pregnant with an analogous metaphysical reservation or exposition of their own. The outward forms may be different, but the substance and essence is almost the same in the form of penalty or reward. The case of religion is in absolute conformity with the laws of nature. Whilst they look upon certain religions as unaccomplished and incomplete, I would ask them not to undervalue their worth, but to treat them as if they were undergoing the process of evolution. The laws of nature are none else but those created by God for the administration of the universe, and for which God is solely responsible. There is law everywhere, and man cannot be an exception to it. There is stability and uniformity in the laws of nature because God is responsible for them. If the material universe had the same faculties as man possesses and were given a similar choice, the whole world would turn topsy-turvy. In the same way, there are laws for man, some mandatory, some directory, and some exempting him from their

application. Without such laws, there would be wholesale confusion and tumult and no one would be held responsible for what he does. Anarchism would prevail everywhere. And to efface this revolting state in the spiritual world, God has from time to time sent on earth different messengers in different climes and ages, to convince man that he was placed under certain obligations and incurred liabilities, and that it was obligatory on him to know himself and Him, who had created him from dust. The object of temporal laws is to restore order and peace. The object of religious or spiritual laws is to restore order in the spiritual world and to maintain that moral standard of humanity which is vitally essential for life and existence. Without such laws, an atheist would stand on an equal footing with one who believes in the existence of God. Without such laws good and evil, light and darkness would be treated as synonymus.

As I have already said, Khayyám's main intention is to show his great humility before God, and where he is said to have transgressed the limits of propriety, which I think he has not, he has furnished us with a practical illustration of the frailty of human nature and, as a redeeming feature of which, he has contributed valuable literature in the form of pathetic invocations to God to show His boundless mercy and compassion. I would again repeat the old motto of the wise: 'Do your duty

with the best and most honest intentions and depend upon God for success and always hold yourself guilty and repentant before Him, for you may have neglected your duty ; and neglect of duty and ignorance of law are not to be entertained as an excuse.'

سازنده کار مرده و زنده توئی
دارنده این چرخ پراگنده توئی *
من گر چه بدم صاحب این بدد توئی
کس را چه کند چو آفریننده توئی *

It is Thou who organizeth the actions of both the dead and the living,
It is Thou who sustaineth the scattered firmament ;
If I am vile, Thou art the Lord of this slave,
Why should the fault lie with any one when Thou art the Creator ?

Compare Zauq :—

جو کچھ کہ ہوا ہم سے وہ کس طرح نہ ہوتا
حکم ازلی ذوق یوں ہی ہو ہی چکا تھا *
Why could we not do what we have done ?
O Zauq, it was already ordained by God from eternity.

A great injustice is generally done by not quoting the sweet and lovely Hindi songs. I would ask my readers to compare the opening lines of Binda Deen's well-known *Thumri*, in which a woman complains of the indifference of her beloved Shyam

Girdhari (the love-hero) and at last attributes it to her karma that it was predestined that her Shyam would be a reckless and frivolous beloved, not content with her but keeping company with different women. It may be noted here that in the Hindi songs a lover is always a woman and man the beloved.

ماڻون ماڻون ناڻيهاري
 چاهه پاڻئون پڙو والي *
 جو هوني تبلي سو هوڻئي سڄئي
 من مان سمجهه سمجهه پڇيتائي *
 مورو ڪرم مين ڀڙي لکيا تبا
 شيام ملين هر جائئي *
 ماڻون ماڻون ناڻيهاري

Mánún mánún na teháree
 Cháhe páún paroúwálee
 Jo honi thi so ho gai sajni
 Man mán samajh samajh pachhátani
 More karama men yahi likha tha
 Shyám milen harjái.
 Mánún mánún na tíhárí.

Never, never, should I be reconciled, O beloved !
 Though I have to fall on thy feet with folded hands.

What had to happen O sister-companion, has already happened,

How often I have secretly regretted with recurring consciousness,

That it was so predestined in my karma,

That my beloved Shyam should be everywhere.

The first two lines are pregnant with the different passions of love, hate, anger, stubborn-headedness, love-mingled anger, coquetry, indifference, semi-conciliatory attitude, reproach, and despondence—passions to be illustrated only by an accomplished singer in a variety of ways and styles with recurring sweetness, effect, delicate and delightful cadence, as if transporting one to the legitimate love-scenes of Indian households.

Khawāja Hāfiz has described the problem of free-will and necessity in different and beautiful ways. He says for instance :—

برو ای زاهد و دعوت نه کنم سوئے بهشت
که خدا در ازل از بهر بهشتم نه سرشت *

O thou puritan, go away, and do not invite me to enter Paradise,
For the Lord from the beginning did not fashion me for it.

Again Hāfiz says :—

برو ای راهد و بر درد کشان خورده مگیر
کار فرمائی قدر میکند این من چه کنم *

Get thee away O puritan and do not find fault with the drunkards,
What am I doing? The ordainer of predestination does it!

Compare: Oliver Wendell Holmes' 'Life, as we call it, is nothing but the edge of the boundless ocean of existence.'

The second and most important problem of mysticism lies in the fact that all human beings are the reflection of one infinite light, or the shoots of a clump of bamboos whereof they make lutes, or a drop of an unfathomable ocean, or particles of an unbounded desert of sand and that all of them wander about like pilgrims or exiles in this world.

اول بخودم چو آشنا میکردی
 آخر ز خودم چرا جدا میکردی *
 چون ترک مفت نه بود از روز نخست
 سرگشته بعالمم چرا میکردی *

When at first Thou madest me conversant with
 Thee,
 Why didst Thou at length sever me from Thee?
 When from the very beginning Thou wast not to
 leave me,
 Why didst Thou send me to this world confounded?

Maulána Rúmi sings in the same strain :—

از نیستان تا مرا به بریده اند
 از نفیرم مرد وزن نالیده اند * (رومی)

As they have cut me off from the clump of bamboos,
 Both men and women have wept in response to my
 sobs and lamentations.

He goes on to explain that the soul, being exiled

from its home, has wept a great deal and its melancholy tunes have moved the hearts of men and women to pathetic weeping. This demonstrates the fact that human beings in this life are no more than wanderers, who, at last, will have to return to the eternal fountain head of all life.

David Hume¹ in his essay on the Platonist, or, The Man of Contemplation and Philosophical Devotion says 'The divinity is a boundless ocean of bliss and glory human minds are smaller streams, which, arising at first from this ocean, seek still, amid all their wanderings, to return to it, and to lose themselves in that immensity of perfection. When checked in this natural course by vice or folly, they become furious and enraged, and, swelling to a torrent, do then spread horror and devastation on the neighbouring plains.'

ای دل ار عمار حسم اگر پاک شوی
 تو روح مجردی بر افلاک شوی *
 عرشست بشیمن تو شرمست دادا
 گاهی و مقیم حطه خاک شوی *

O heart! when thou art freed from the encumbrance of the body,
 Thou, being a single soul, wouldest soar to the heavens,
 Thy eyrie is the Empyrean, it is a disgrace to thee
 To come and take up thy abode on the earth

¹ *Essays Literary Moral and Political* p 91

Thus FitzGerald :—

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Wer't not a shame—wer't not a shame for him
In the clay carcase crippled to abide.

Compare Wazir :—

قفس تن مین نہ گہرائو ای طائر روح
جو گرفتار ہی اک روز رہا ہوتا ہی * (وزیر)

O bird of soul, do not be uneasy in the prison of
the body,
Whoever is arrested is released one day.

The third mystic problem of life is the common idea current throughout the world that the cosmos is mortal, transitory and deceptive. Every new day in life brings additional responsibilities, misfortunes, cares, worries and sorrows. There is no real happiness in this life. And, even if we laugh and pretend to be cheerful, there is grief and sorrow behind the mask. Human nature is never contented and has to face troubles a new and afresh.

این دہر کہ بود مدتی منزل ما
نامد بہ جز از بلاؤ غم حاصل ما *
افسوس کہ حل نہ گشت یک مشکل ما
رفتیم و ہزار حسرت اندر دل ما *

This universe which was for a long time our sojourn,
Nothing was gain to us but calamities and sorrows.
Alas! not a single one of our complications was
solved,

We went away with a thousand unrealized desires
in our heart

شادی مطلب کہ حاصل عمر دے است

* ہر ذرہ ر خاک کیقبانے و حمے است

احوال حہان و اصل این عمر کہ ہست

* حوائے و خیالے و فریبے و دے است *

Do not desire cheerfulness, for the outcome of life
is a breath,

Every atom is from the dust of a Kaigubad and a
Jamshid,

The affairs of the world and the reality of this
life is

A dream, a whim, a deception and momentary.

The fourth problem of life is that it is unstable.

The life of a human being is the embodiment of
sorrows and calamities.

چون حاصل آدمی دردن شورستان

* حر خوردن غصہ نیست یا کندن جان

خرم دل آن گرین حہان رود نرمت

* آسردہ کسی کہ خود نیامد بہ حہان *

When in this world of sorrows, the outcome of a
man's life is

Nothing but to fret or become tired of life,

Merry is the heart of one who soon went away from
this world,

Happy is the man who did not of his own accord
come into this world

CHAPTER XI

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

FROM the preceding quatrains on life it may appear that Khayyám prefers a life of sadness and hates everything in it. But in fact it is not so. He rather teaches us something different. Obviously Khayyám's philosophy of life is the echo of Epicurus. It teaches us to have no concern whatever with the past or future. It persuades us to keep our eye on the present. Enjoy it. Eat, drink and be merry, for the world is unstable. There is nothing in this life which you can call permanent. The world is a place of unending vicissitudes. Háfiz says :—

چنان نماند و چنین نیزهم نخواهد ماند

Such has not remained and such also shall not remain.

It is, therefore, best for us to pass our lives happily. Transform your sufferings into pleasure and take life as it is with contentment and cheerfulness. Make it beautiful even in its stormy moments. Make it sublime. Make it harmonious. Enjoy nature and its beauties. Let love smooth its course.

You will have to face the irrevocable hour of death to-morrow and you will not come back again to enjoy all the delights of this world. Value the moments at your disposal with as much cheerfulness as you can, for they are very precious.

خیام اگر زیاده مستی خوش باش
 بالاله رخه اگر نشستی خوش باش *
 چون آخر کار نیست خرابی بودن
 آنگار که نیستی چو هستی خوش باش *

Khayyám, if thou art over-drunk, be happy,
 If thou keepest company with a tulip-faced beloved,
 be happy ;
 When, at last, thou wilt be non-existent,
 Know that thou art not (in existence); and be
 happy when thou art alive.

There is nothing in this world so impressively certain as death. Communities holding different dogmas and religious views entertain hopes of a more brilliant life after death. Khayyám treats these thoughts as illusory. No one can deny the inevitable hour of death. He lays down before us this simple truth and calls on us to realize that no time should be wasted, that life should be enjoyed. He congratulates those, whose circumstances afford a chance of happiness, and insists on their realizing the worth of blissful moments. He treats life as the source of enjoyment. He discards the idea that

life is a bed of thorns. He advises us to convert life into a bed of roses, if it is not yet so, for everything in this world was made for us and for seasonable and reasonable enjoyment.

در وقت بهار اگر بتی حور سرشت
 پُر می قدحی دهد مرا بر لب کشت *
 نُرچه بر هر کس این سخن باشد زشت
 سگ به زمن آر دگر برم نام بهشت *

If in the spring-time a hūrī-natured sweetheart,
 Hands over to me a brimming cup of wine by the
 side of a field,
 Although every one would take this word as foul,
 Prefer a dog to me, if I ever repeat the word
 'Paradise'.

یک شیشه شراب و لب یار و لب کشت
 این جمله مرا نقد و ترا نسیه بهشت *
 قومی به بهشت و دوزخ اندر گردند
 که رفت به دوزخ و که آمد ز بهشت *

A bottle of wine, the lips of a sweetheart and the
 side of a field,
 All these are cash to me, and Paradise to thee is a
 credit,
 A community is involved in Paradise and Hell,
 Oh! who went to Hell? And who came out of
 Paradise?

روزے کہ گذشتہ است از و یاد مکن
 فردا کہ بیامده است فریاد مکن *
 برنامده و گذشتہ نغیاد مکن
 حالے خوش باش و عمر بر باد مکن *

Do not recall the day that has passed away,
 Do not clamour for to-morrow that has not come,
 Do not rely on that which has not come and on the
 past,
 Be happy in the present and do not waste thy life.

FitzGerald says :—

And if the wine you drink, the Lip you press,
 Even in what All begins and ends in—Yes ;
 Think then you are To-day what Yesterday
 You were—To-morrow you shall not be less.

The past, present and future are linked together. They are parts of the same fabric. The present is the result of the past and, when the present becomes past, it helps to the improvement of the future present. The materials of the fabric are sorrow, pain, good and evil. They illustrate the evolutionary character of the world, the psychic nature of man, and tend to bloom in the everlasting peace and happiness of mankind. We shape our lives from the experiences of the past, and endeavour to build edifices of higher morality for the advantage of posterity. The poet, in laying special stress on the present, means to discard the troubles of the past and the anticipated or possible storms of the

future, but insists on making use of the present, and bids us strive with persistent energy in the thorough utilization of life, because he is confident of the fact that good and honest labour is always fruitful and imparts happiness. Even our failures, if they take place in the form of Fate, give us pleasure, because we have the satisfaction of having discharged our duty as much, or as far, as we have been able. We cannot do away with the past, nor be regardless of the future, but what we are required to do is not to waste our present in fruitless sorrows; but to do our duty which is the fountain-head of success and happiness. Dr. Whyman¹ on *The Philosophy of Yesterday* quotes thus Ḥādīth: 'Man cannot know himself until he hath seen Allāh, and to see Allāh he must submit to the divine will that he may be led up the golden staircase of perfect vision; and Islām means submission to the divine will.' He concludes thus: 'The cities and empires of yesterday are buried in dust and decay. Yet their messages are pregnant with messages of lofty faith and boundless hope. Nothing that has been vivified by the hand of Allāh can die, and think you He would have us rub the slate clean of messages left us through the ages? Let us rather read and learn them well, that understanding them we may add a message of our own, that, when our to-day becomes

¹ *Islāmic Review*, April 1915.

another's yesterday. We may from our mistakes learn wisdom, and mounting to our temple of faith make it loftier and wider till it reach the home of Alláh Himself.'

ار درس علوم حمله نگریری نه
 و اندر سر رلف تلبر آوری به
 ران پیش که روز کار حوصت ریزد
 تو خون بیله در قدح ریزی نه *

It is better for thee to abstain from the study of
 all branches of knowledge,
 It is better for thee to be lost in the thoughts of a
 sweetheart's locks,
 Before the times spill thy blood,
 Do thou spill in the drinking-pot the blood of the
 cup (i. e. drink wine before thy death).

ران پیش که بر سرت شبیخون آرند
 فرمائی که تا دانه کلگون آرند
 تو زرنه ای غافل دندان که ترا
 در بونه نهند و نار بیرون آرند *

Before they attack thee by surprise,
 Order a cupfull of rosy wine ;
 Thou art not gold, O unconscious fool,
 To be put in and taken out of the crucible again.

این عقل که در راه سعادت ندید
 روزی صد بار خود ترا میگوید
 دریاب تو این یکدمه فرصت که نه
 آن قره که ندروی و آخر روید *

This wisdom that trots on the road of virtue,
Warns thee a hundred times each day ;
Utilize thou this momentary leisure, for thou art not
That herbage that thou prunest and which grows
at last.

اس مستی موهوم پہ کیا کیجئے نازش
ہی شام کو کچھ اور تو ہی وقت سحر اور * (مسعود)

Compare Mas'úd :—

On what ground should one be proud of this
fantastical life,
When in the evening it is something different from
that in the morning.

دریاب کہ از روح جدا خواہی رفت
در پردہ اسرار فنا خواہی رفت *
می نوش ندانی از کجا آمدہ
خوش باش ندانی کہ کجا خواہی رفت *

Know that thou wilt have to bid farewell to thy
soul,
(And that) thou wilt have to go behind the curtain
of the mysteries of destruction ;
Drink wine, for thou dost not know from whence
thou hast come,
Be happy, for thou art not aware where thou wilt
have to go.

چون عہدہ نمی کند کسے فردا را
حالے خوش کن تو این دل شیدا را *
می نوش بنور ماہ ای ماہ کہ ماہ
بسیار تباہ و نیابد ما را *

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

When no one guarantees the morrow,
Now cheer up this loving heart,
Drink wine, O moon in the moonlight, for the
moon
Will shine a good deal but shall never find us.

Thus FitzGerald :—

You rising moon that looks for us again
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane,
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden—and for one in vain.

Compare Vazir —

کون حیثا ہی ای منم مرے
آؤ تو دیکھ لیں نظر ہر کے *

Who comes to life after death?
Come here O sweetheart, let me gaze on thee to
the full (before I die)

مہی حوریں و شاد بودن آگے میں است
فارغ بودن رکھر و دین دین میں است *
گھٹم نہ عروس و ہر گاہیں تو چہیست
کھتا دل حرم تو گاہیں میں است *

It is my motto to drink wine and to be happy,
My faith is to be unconcerned with atheism and
religion,
I asked the bride-world, 'What is thy dowry',
'My dowry is the cheerfulness of thy heart', it
answered

Ghálíb says :—

می سے غرض نشاط ہی کس روسیاء کو
اک گونہ بیخودی مجھے دن رات چاہئے *

Who is that black-faced fellow who wants to enjoy
strong drink,

I want a sort of unconsciousness day and night.

Ghálíb was an well-known and a fearless drunkard. But he drank to drown his sorrows in the cup. In other words, if he could not overcome his sorrows, he yielded to drink in order to forget them altogether. He lived in an age when the dissolution of the Moghul Empire had reached its climax. The fearful Mutiny of 1857 had brought misery and destruction to many a prosperous family, from which he also had no way of escape.

آن بہ کہ ز جام و بادہ دل شاد کنیم
وز نامدہ و گذشتہ کم یاد کنیم *
این عاریتے حیات زندانی را
یک لحظہ ز بند عقل آزاد کنیم *

It behoves us to cheer up the heart with cup and
wine,

And think little of the future and the past ;

This transitory and imprisoned life

Let us free from the bondage of intellect.

The poet wants to drink as much wine as will
make him lose his intellect for a moment, so that

may become unmindful of the past and careless for the future. He wants in strong drink to sink his sorrows and to cheer up his spirits, for cheerfulness is the key and alchemy of life. The practical demonstration of this statement lies in the words of Ghalib, the great classical poet of India —

تا کے رعم زمانہ معجروں ناشی

نا چشم پر آب و دل پر حور ناشی *

می نوش و نہ عیش کوش و حوشدل می ناش

راں پیدش کرن دائرہ بیرون ناشی *

How long wilt thou be sorrowful because of the worldly cares

With tears in eyes and with a bleeding heart,

Drink wine, and seek luxury and keep thy heart lively,

Before thou goest out of the circle (i.e. of this life).

می حور کہ بربر گل سے خواہی حقت

سے موس و سے حرف و سے ہمدم و حقت *

رہار نہ کس مگو تو اس رار بہقت

ہر لکۃ پڑمرد نہ حواہد شکفت *

Drink wine for thou wilt sleep an everlasting sleep beneath the earth

Without a friend, a colleague, a comrade and a sweetheart,

Be careful not to communicate to anybody that this unknown secret

Every shrivelled up tulip will not bloom

This quatrain obviously rejects the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul. Apart from the ideal beauty of language and thought, it portrays the real nature of facts after death, which no one can deny, as far as the material world is concerned.

من هیچ ندانم که مرا آنکه سرشت
از اهل بهشت گفت یا دوزخ زشت *
قوت و بقیه و بادۀ بر لب کشت
این هر سه مرا نقد و ترا نسیه بهشت *

Nothing at all I know that He who fashioned me
Intended me for Paradise or the evil Hell ;
Eatables, a beloved and wine by the side of a field,
Each of these three are cash to me, and to thee

Paradise is a matter of debt.

کم کن طمع از جهان و می زی خرسند
وز نیک و بد زمانه بگل پیوند *
می بر کف و زلف دلبره گیر که زود
هم بگذرد و نماند این روزی چند *

'Covet the world little and live cheerfully,
'Sever thy connection with the good or bad of the
world,
Take hold of wine and toy with the locks of a
sweetheart ; for soon
The chance passes away and these few days will
expire.

FitzGerald says —

Perplex no more with Human or Divine,
To morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress slender Minister of Wine

An Indian poet has put the same idea in the following beautiful and touching verses —

ساقیا ترسا نہ تو ایک دود پانی کے لئے
حبی تزیتا ہی شراب ارغوانی کے لئے *
بہر کہان نہ دوست ہوئے اُور کہان یہ حام حم
آگلی پیری تو روئیکے حوانی کے لئے *

O cup bearer! do not afflict me for a drop of
water,
My heart is panting for the rosy crimson wine,
Where shall I find these friends and this Jamshid's
cup again?
When old age creeps upon us, we all shall weep
for youth

اِس قافلہ عمر عجب میگذرد
درباب دہے کہ ناظر میگذرد *
ساقی عم فردائے حرمیں چہ حوری
در دہ قدح نادر کہ شب میگذرد *

This caravan of life is passing wonderfully,
Utilize the moment that passes delightfully,
O cup bearer, why dost thou grieve for what will
happen to thy companions to morrow,
(Pray) give me the cup of wine, for the night is
passing away

روزیست خوش و هوا نه گرم است نه سرد
 ابر از رخ گلزار همی شویید گرد *
 بلبل به زبان پهلوی با گل زرد
 فریاد همی زند که می باید خورد *

The day is pleasant, and the air is neither hot nor cold,

The cloud is washing the dust from the face of the blooming garden,

The nightingale in the Pahlavi (ancient language of Persia) tongue to the pale rose

Is clamouring for wine to be drunk.

FitzGerald says:—

And David's lips are lockt ; but in divine
 High piping Pehlevi, with Wine ! Wine ! Wine !
 Red Wine !—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
 That sallow cheek of hers to 'incarnadine.'

ماه رمضان برفت و شوال آمد
 هنگام نشاط و عیش و قوال آمد *
 آمد که آنکه خیکها اندر دوش
 گویند که پشت پشت حمال آمد *

The month of Ramadán has passed away and Shawwál has come,

The time of merry-making and luxury and the singers has come,

The time has come now for the big leather bottles of wine to be carried on the shoulder,

And cries of 'Make way, make way, the porter comes', be heard.

FitzGerald put it thus :—

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little Moon look'd in that all were seeking :
And then they jogg'd each other, 'Brother !
Brother !
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking.'

It is really a very dangerous philosophy for man, which allows him to enjoy himself to the full and to do whatever he likes, irrespective of good or evil. We cannot, however, expect such a state from Khayyám. He has made a confession in some of his quatrains that he does believe in the after-life, that punishment should be meted out to the sinners, and rewards bestowed on the pious. In those quatrains he has advised us to abstain from the commission of evil deeds and to lead a life that is virtuous and commendable.

The autocratic forms of Government are the hot-bed of intrigues. From a democratic point of view they frequently employ all that is mean, low, selfish, unlawful, wrongful and outrageous to humanity. They leave no stone unturned to hinder the interests of others. They care little for the excruciating sufferings of the poor, the innocent and the deserving ; but play havoc over all they can get, in order to satisfy their own insignificant personal wants and mean desires. There is little feeling of humanity in them. In short they do all they can for their own interests, without considering the

welfare and the prosperity of the poor. Autocracy or despotism is not in the nature of things. It is a curse to society. It is an inhuman machinery contrived to torture humanity, to render justice isolated from infallible legislation, to take the life out of society and to retard the progress of civilization. Khayyām witnessed this state of things in his time. He clearly saw that the majority of the officials and their agents indulged in diabolical schemes, always conspired together, made false pretensions, uttered deliberate lies, stirred up causes of discord, disunion and friction, exerted their faculties and energy to secure unlawful objects and tried to win favours from those in power. Khayyām perceived full well that what these men secured was after all a fleeting phantom, thoroughly unreliable. It was subject to speedy decay and dissolution. You see a Vizier to-day in the exercise of full powers. A short time after you find him degraded and fallen. You see a man, who, a few months before, decided the fate of millions of men, and to-day he is begging for his livelihood. The Barmekides¹ rule with unlimited powers and glory to-day over a vast population. All of a sudden, they are slaughtered in cold-blood, they fall with an unimaginable indignity, and their very name becomes a disgrace. The great and learned literary genius, Abu'l-Faḍl, is the chief

¹ See Sell, *The Umayyad and the 'Abbāsid Khālifates*, pp. 75-80 (C.L.S., Madras.)

courtier to-day and to-morrow is beheaded. These are the inevitable results of absolutism.

A philosopher, who witnesses this manner of life, these practices that debase humanity, is bound to be deeply affected by the trend of such ignominious events. He is forced to say that the world is deceptive, unreal and unreliable. Men of rank and high dignitaries have no value in his eyes. The outward grandeur of man's life is worthless to him : he perceives its higher and nobler problems. He unconsciously lifts himself upwards, soars higher and higher, witnesses the earthen vessels prepared on a potter's wheel from the clay of the once powerful Faridún. At last, the philosopher arrives at the conclusion that worries and cares should be done away with. Life is short. Pass it with contentment, with calm and quiet grace, and with happy satisfaction. Eat drink and be happy, and, when you depart from the world, depart cheerfully. When you were born, you wept ; when you die let others weep for you.

Khayyám is perfectly aware of the fact that a man with such views and notions is looked upon contemptuously and receives no sympathy from those in power. He is shocked at this state of affairs. Accordingly he says :—

ابن جمع اکابر که مناصب دارند
از غصه و غم ز جان خود بیزارند *

وانكس كه اسير حرص چرن ايشان نيست
 اين طرفه كه آدميش مي شمارند *

This company of the dignitaries with position and
 rank,
 Are tired of their very life with anger and sorrow ;
 One who is not greedy like them,
 Is it not wonderful, they do not count him as a man.

In harmonious language Khayyám teaches us the lesson of contentment and freedom. He advises us to drop all care about our livelihood and to defy our enemies. He is a desperate fatalist and keeps a never-failing eye on the bounties and kindness of the Author of our being :—

چون رزق تو آنچه عدل قسمت فرمود
 يك ذره نه كم شود نه خواهد افزود *
 آسوده ز هر چه نيست مي بايد شد
 و ازاده ز هر چه هست مي بايد بود *

When the Lord in His justice has ordained thee a
 fixed quantity of sustenance,
 Not a particle of it will decrease or increase ;
 What is not available, one should not worry about
 it,
 And what is present, one should not care for.

Compare with this the last words of Father Fulton, S J. —

Question not but live add labour,
Till the goal is won,
Helping every feeble neighbour,
Seeking help from none

حواہی کہ ترا قربیت اسرار رسد
مپسند کہ کس را رتو آزار رسد *
ار مرگت میددش و عم رزق محذور
کین ہر دو بوقت حوش ناچار رسد *

If thou dost wish (to learn) the lesson of mysteries,
Do not approve the hurting of any one,
Neither fear death nor be overwhelmed by the
sorrows of livelihood,
For these two will invariably reach thee when
their hour approaches

What Kharyyam looks upon as an enviable life is described in the following quatrain —

درد ہر ہر آنکہ نیم نای دارد
و رہر شست آستای دارد *
ے حادہ کس درد نہ محدود کسے
گو شد ہری کہ حوش چہائے دارد *

Whoever in the world has half a loaf of bread,
A little home wherein to lay his head,
He who is neither the servant nor the master of
any one,
Tell him to live happily, for the happy world is his.

Ibn-i-Yamín very beautifully portrays such a life thus :—

دو تائی زن اگر از گندم است یا از جو
 دو تائی جامه اگر کهنه است یا از نو *
 به چار گوشه دیوار خود به خاطر جمع
 که کس نگوید ازین جا به خیز و آن چارو *
 هزار بار فزون تر به نزد ابن یمن
 ز فتر مملکت کیقباد و کین خسرو *

Two pieces of bread whether of wheat or barley,
 Two pieces of cloth whether old or new.
 Within a four-walled house : thoroughly contented
 Where no one says : 'Get up from here and go
 there',
 This (life) is a thousand times better in Ibn-i-
 Yamín's eyes,
 Than the Kaiqubád and Kai Khusrú's glorious
 empire.

کر دست دهد ز مغز گندم نان
 از مے کدو ز گوسفند ران *
 و آنکه من و تو نشسته در ویران
 عیش بود آن نه حد هر سلطانی *

A loaf of wheaten bread in hand
 A gourd of wine and a sheep's thigh,
 And thou and I sitting in the wilderness—
 This is joy not within the reach of kings.

FitzGerald translates it thus :—

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow !

Compare :—

چلو بھی مسعود سوے صحرا کہ آج وعدہ ہی دحت رز سے
رہینگے دنیا کے یوں ہی جیگرے تمہیں بھی اسکا ملال کیا ہی *

Come Mas'ud, let us go to the jungle, for we have
made an appointment
With the daughter of the grape (i.e. wine) ;
Why do you worry yourself with worldly affairs for
These will go on for ever as they are.

یک نان بدو روز گر شود حاصل مرد

در کوزه شکستہ دمی آف سرد *

مامور کسی دیگر چرا داند ہوں ؟

قا خدمت جون حویہ چرا داند کرد ؟ *

If a man earns a loaf in two days,
And in a broken vessel one draught of cold water,
Why should he be under obligation to others ?
Why should he serve a man like himself ?

وقت صحراست خیزای مانہ نار

برمک نرمک بادہ بخود چنگت نواز *

کاینہا کہ بخوابند نمانند بسے

و آنها کہ شدند کس نمی آید بار *

It is dawn, awake, O wealth of blandishments,
Gently, gently sip the wine and play the harp,
For these who sleep do not get much,
Those who have gone, none of them comes back.

With a master-stroke of poetic genius, Khayyám offers a great compliment to the poor hard-working classes, who perform their duty conscientiously, regularly and with thorough honesty. They get up early in the morning for the work of the toilsome day; they realize their arduous task of life and their grave responsibilities; they not only maintain their individual respectable position, but do all they can to make those dependent on them comfortable. They get up early and, having partaken of a simple meal, enjoy their pure wine, which is more precious to them than the costliest liquor and gives them strength and domestic happiness. They know the worth of time and utilize it to the full. In a mystic sense the morning wine means devotion and prayer to the Deity.

Now, we have to scrutinize the philosophy of life as taught in Khayyám's quatrains. What does the philosophy of life mean? Are there different philosophies of life? What is philosophy itself? It is tantamount to wisdom, and, technically speaking, it is the description of that insight, or the realization of those mental acquisitions and observations, obtained by penetrating into the depth of the natural phenomena. These phenomena may be

different. They may be connected with the animal life or with inanimate objects. They may depict the character and life of saints and religious and spiritual leaders, or they may be directly connected with the works of God the Almighty Himself.

The outstanding feature of philosophy lies in its aiming at wider and higher ranges of thought. In its advanced stage it deals with mental theories. Then comes the fresh problem of necessity. Why such necessity arises and what relation does it bear to man may be questioned. Is man subject to necessity, or is necessity governed by man?

What then is the philosophy of life? It is the highest attainment of human thought, it is the procreation of the most developed stage of mental activity and the essence of speculation on the most complex problems of the universe. It is a problem that finds place in the mind of every class of thoughtful men. The problem is entertained by almost every individual and, at last, is given up with disappointment by the majority of people because of its impenetrable nature. What are we? Why are we? Where have we come from? Where have we to go to? What is the good or ultimate object of our being? What is this whole universe and what is it for? Are we awake or dreaming? Is the existing state of things to continue, or will it assume a different shape?

Is there only one philosophy of life, or are there a variety of philosophies connected with it? The philosophy of life as expounded by Khayyám in his isolated quatrains, if taken together, serves to answer one question after the other. Khayyám's quatrains, therefore, form a special school of thought, constitute a dignified association and try to follow a special denomination.

There is decidedly no solution of the problem of life. All the Persian poets, specially the Şúfis of Islám; Buddha the enlightened, Schöpenhauer and other philosophers of similar schools of thought have all, with one accord, at last arrived at the conclusion that it is next to impossible to find the positive solution of the knotty problem of life; that the accurate knowledge of the real state of things, as they are, is beyond the intellectual scope of human beings. Khayyám, perhaps, represents his own or his brother philosophers' case in saying that he saw an irreligious man of broad and liberal views sitting on the bare ground. He belonged to no denomination and possessed no creed. He was neither a Musalman nor an infidel. He possessed neither worldly dignity nor riches. He followed not the commandments of any specific religion. He was incapable of knowing the nature of the reality of things. He followed no persuasion and had no positive faith in anything. After this description of a Rind, Khayyám, to the vexation of the

so-called puritans, who pass their judgment on the outward state of things, ironically challenges them to show if any one of them is capable of solving the delicate and complex mysteries of the world. At last, to their great chagrin, he decides that no one in this frail and deceptive world can ever know the reality as it is. Again he defiantly treats the subject in a different style and says that, in fact, no one can unravel the secrets of eternity and no one can claim to command a well-balanced or final insight into the different mysteries of the universe, for their disclosure is absolutely impossible. You and I, he says, are in fact holding mutual conversation behind the veil, and, when it is raised, none will remain as he is. Again he says that the beginning and end of a certain age is not discoverable, and no one can possibly claim to have the knowledge of whence he came and whither after death he is going.

دورے کہ در و آمدن و رفتن ماست
 آبرا کہ بدایت کہ بہایت پیدااست *
 کس می کہ زند دے درین معنی راست
 کین آمدن ار کہجاست رفتن نکجاست *

Khayyam has again treated the insoluble problem of life by saying that yesterday a vessel was complainingly asking the potter why he made it and then broke it. In the same way, Khayyam refers to people, who, in spite of their ignorance of the

real nature of things, pretend to impress others exultingly with their intellectual acquisitions and their knowledge of the mysteries of heaven and earth. Khayyám is of opinion that these people are practising deception upon themselves. He again refers to people, who worship God merely in expectation of húrís and palatial abodes after death. Khayyám seriously objects to the devotional character of these people, for true worship and sincere love of God is indifferent to rewards or punishment. Love must be unselfish, pure and real.

قوی ز کزاف در غرور افتادند

قوی ز پی حور و قصور افتادند *

معلوم شود چو پردها بردارند

کز کوئے تو جمله دور دور افتادند *

It is a favourite theory that all men are the reflection of some light, or a drop of some boundless ocean. They have been all isolated and stranded within this world of never-ending miseries. But death would restore them to the self-same fountain of light or to the ocean of everlasting life. Khayyám also welcomes the sweetness of this theory; but with charming reasonableness and a desperate liberty, so often taken by poets of eminence, asks God, the Omnipotent Himself, what caused Him to send him on a journey, after he had been allowed

to be introduced to Him and made dear, and why He sent him into this world to wander about, overridden with ceaseless cares and sufferings, when He did not actually intend to deprive him of His company.

All these instances demonstrate the indissoluble nature of the existence of this world and the impenetrable mystery of life. It seems to be unlikely that this mystery will be unveiled in this world. It may be expected in the life to come. Khayyām is unable to realize reality. He scrutinized the various attempts made from time to time to the solution of this great problem and at last found them all to be an absolute failure. We have now to see the foundation-stone on which the edifice of Khayyām's philosophy has been built, as regards the secret of the cosmos, the nature of God, and the scope of knowledge. He starts with pure ignorance. So far all the sound thinkers, speculators and philosophers have been baffled in the attempt to find out the real secret of the reality, veiled behind the natural phenomena, and the wonders of the Omnipresent Lord. The click of a clock, the burning of fire, and other different phenomena observed by us in the daily routine of our life, so simple to look at, constitute a stupendous problem of exceptional difficulty which no one has ever been able to solve. We know matter, and, according to some, merely the existence of matter,

and nothing else. For instance we can carry our hand from point A to B. Undoubtedly we see this movement, we are conversant with its relations and antecedents. We also know the process underlying the movement being communicated to our body. But we are quite ignorant of the real cause of such movement, how it emanated from its source and worked upon the matter. In fact, matter, like soul and mind and other kindred objects, is unknown to us. Be it a learned or an ignorant man, they equally express their ignorance as to the cause of the different problems striking their mind. 'Verily we have not recognized Thee as we ought to have recognized Thee'. *Alá'arafaákā Haqqa Ma'réfatika.*

مَا عَرَفْنَاكَ حَقَّ مَعْرِفَتِكَ

In fact philosophy teaches us that the beginning of knowledge has no end and cannot be completely mastered. We simply know the superficial aspect of things. We are in absolute darkness as to the reality of phenomena. Though the mystery of the world is not meant for us, we know so far that life is a problem and that this world is shrouded in mystery. We do not know what it is. Even this negative knowledge carries a great weight with it, although it is nothing. The creation of the question in our mind and our search after the truth, are an evidence of our enlightenment and high position in

the world in comparison with the other creations. Though we do not know the causes of divine wonders, our wisdom is usually affected through our senses by the superficial condition of natural phenomena. We are sensible of the causation of such effects. Life taken collectively consists in our realization of the considerable effect of worries, troubles, pains and sufferings. The fact that life is a source of our sorrows is the maxim formulated by khayyam by the mystics, by the Sufis, by Buddha and the different pessimist philosophers of the world and their followers. The world is full of calamities, is deceptive and untrustworthy. There is no real happiness in this life. What is called happiness has a strain of grief in it. Its end is sorrow.

Life like a dome of many coloured glass
Strains the white radiance of Eternity

(Shelley)

Saada has sung in the same strain and said that in this life he witnessed nothing but perpetual dying and heart-burnings, that he passed his life in the mornings and evenings of this world like a burning candle.

مردار مرتے لئے کچھ نہ دیکھا ہم ہستی میں

کئی اپنی دو مثل شمع صبح و شام دنیا میں *

Again he says 'O Saada whoever came into this world, he took nothing with him, just see me going back with a heart full of desires

سودا جہان مین آکے کوئی کچھ نہ لیگیا
جاتا ہوں ایک مین دل پر آرزو لئے *

Ghalib compares his existence to a speechless extinguished lamp of the grave-yard of the poor.

چراغ کشتہ ہوں مین بے زبان گور غریبان کا

Mír, the first and unparalleled Urdu poet of India, with a pathetic and boundless disappointment, says : ‘The burning stain of separation, the unrealized longing for the beloved’s meeting, the intensity of fondness ; are the surging embroilments with which I sank into my grave.’

داغ فراق و حسرت وصل آرزوے شوق

مین ساتھ زبر خاک بھی ہنگامہ لیگیا *

Khayyám, in dealing with the problem under discussion, advises us not to seek worldly pleasures, because the essence of this life is only a breath, that every particle of earth is the once crowned Kaiqubád and Jamshíd, that the real nature of life and of the cosmos is a dream, a delusion, or a breath only. Again he says that before thee, many a man and a woman have lived, who practically adorned and illuminated the world. Thou shouldest, therefore, hasten to go in order that thy body may turn into

dust, because thy dust has already been a thousand times a body.

پیش از تو به مرد و به زن بود ست

* کاداق و حمله شن مرن بود ست *

رود آ که تن تو خاک گردد زرا

* خاک تو دیگر هزار زن بود ست *

Again he narrates this sad story in a different way, and says that his seed was sown with the water of eternity, and his soul was fanned with the fire of grief; that he was wandering on and on round the world like wind and it was a riddle to him where his dust was picked up from.

از آب عدم تحم مرا گاشته اند

* از آتش غم روح من ابراشته اند *

سرگشته چون باد دمبدم گرد جهان

* تا خاک من از چه جائی برداشته اند *

Khayyám treats the instability of life, the unreliable position of man and the frailty of his nature in a more pathetic way and says that one day he visited a potter's establishment, where he saw two

thousand pots, both eloquent and speechless. It seemed to him, as if they asked him where the potters, the buyers and the vendors had gone to. This interrogation may be explained in other words thus—the clay of the pots had been remade and so frequently used over and over again in shaping pots. These pots were so successively sold that their potters, their purchasers and their sellers had all alike long before bidden farewell to this world for ever.

در کار گه کوزه گرے بودم دوش

دیدم دو هزار کوزه گویا و خموش *

هریکت به زبان حال با من گفتند

کو کوزه گر و کوزه خرو کوزه فروش *

The deep gloomy pessimism of an individual, absorbed in the close study of the tragical nature of things and given to pondering over the minutest details, is worth consideration. Without a shadow of doubt, Khayyám and his brother philosophers are quite justified in leading us to believe in the mournful nature of this short life and in our ephemeral pleasures and their sorrowful end. But pessimism may be welcomed and appreciated, inasmuch as it helps to protect us from the baneful effect of sensual pleasures and their unwarranted gratification.

of lustful desires. It should be welcomed, but only so far as it contributes to the maintenance of that moral standard of excellence, so indispensable for human beings, for otherwise man has no right to live in this world merely to attain his own selfish ends. The main object and mission of man's life is to do good to himself, to his relations, to all men and to his country. But if it is contended that both good and evil are the creation of God, and as nothing was designed as useless, and that it is, therefore, the duty of man to do evil also, then this contention may be disposed off in the significant and weighty words of M. Tougan Baranovsky, who says 'In the life of a man as in the life of a nation, evil is closely interwoven with good. Without evil there would be no good, for good is nothing more than the vanquishing of evil. From this point of view evil not only serves good, but is also, as it were, the invariable basis of its activity. Great historical crimes, like those of which we are eye-witness to-day, have their place in the triumphant onward march of eternal truth. The more terrible the crime, the more beautiful and the more dazzling the power of that good which overcomes it.'¹

Some persons are naturally inclined to study the reality connected with human life from a

¹ *King Albert's Book*, p. 106.

pessimistic point of view only, and their creative imagination always presents to their vision the most disappointing and mournful aspects of life. The more deeply they speculate on the truths of nature and the dark side of the world, the more their intellectual and moral aspirations are disturbed by the protruding forces of despondency. The pessimists always look upon things with disgust. They attach little value to the nobler and brighter side of life. They persuade others to adopt a life of seclusion. But philosophers like Khayyám, who advise us to discard seclusion, point out to us a beautiful and flourishing garden, where useless sadness is extinct, where isolation from and rejection of others is never sought, where freedom and toleration is predominant, where no one cares to think over depressing secrets, where religious prejudice and discussions about the unknowable and the supernatural are disallowed, where the echoes of sorrow are heard with dignified calm and patience, and where the sad music of grief is heard with a cheerful smile. Khayyám advises us to defy sorrows, to face heroically the onward march of the calamities and miseries so often visiting us in life, and bravely shield ourselves against evils with unflinching determination. The vain and conceited glory of the world, the unjust and forceful nature of the strong over the helpless, the showy and ill-earned position and rank of some, all these

in the eye of Khayyám, are the occupations of the fool, the narrow-minded, the low and the mean. He advises us to lead a life of intellectual and spiritual ease and freedom. He tolerates no licentious habits, forbids us to be greedy, warns us against being intemperate, and asks us not to mind the misjudged or mischievous comments made by others about us. He wants us to lead a straight, plain, simple, unaffected and honest life. He wants us to be cheerful even in our dying moments. He desires us to lead a life of happiness even if the heavens fall and the world be moved.

حوش دش تو آجندآن که اس دور فلک

ہم نکسلد و نمائد اس روز چند *

If the mean world is unfaithful to you, he advises you emphatically to pass a life of intoxication and respectable humility.

چوں عالم درون وفا سخواہد کردن

در عالم درون مست و حراف اولی تر *

In fact, he means to say that, if the haughty well-to-do people underrate us, look down upon us, and discard us, because we do not flatter them and because we do not contribute to their evil doings, we should not worry ourselves with their cold indifference, and should not, under any possible

circumstances, swerve from the right path of our good, honest and ideal life. He does not want us to waste our time and energy on the sorrows of the past or on the anxieties of the future, but insists on our being cheerfully careful of the present. To him the best pleasures of this short life comprise the friendly company of the honest, the sincere and the true.

ہم آخر عمر رحلت باید کرد

لذات جہان چشیدہ باشی ہمہ عمر *

Again he asks us not to be at all uneasy about things not fallen to our share, and not to worry with what is decreed for us. He advises us to make the best of the worst circumstances, before we fall as martyrs to the dagger of this tyrannical world.

از نامدہا زرد مکن چہرہ خویش

وز آمدہا آب مکن زہرہ خویش *

بردار ز دنیائی دنی بہرہ خویش

زان پیش کہ دہر بر کشد زہرہ خویش *

These wise words, uttered eight hundred years ago, are in strict conformity with the modern theory of evolution. They demonstrate that Khayyám was the most advanced personality of his age. His teachings refer to the survival of the fittest. He asks us to perform our duty without caring what

others say about us. We should not indulge in fruitless worries for what we have not. 'If you want to win the admiration of the whole world,' Khayyám advises you to be 'cheerful without pride and conceit', for pride is the death-blow to evolution and to the search after truth.

خوابی که همه جهان ترا به پسندند
میباش بخوشدلی و خود را میپسند

Compare :—

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure.

(Tennyson).

Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

(Tennyson).

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more ;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

(Tennyson).

Honour and shame from no condition rise ;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

(Anon).

Not he whose hopes are all fulfilled,
Whose every wish is gratified,
By stern disaster never chilled.
In fiery furnace never tried,
Not he be happy, wise or great !
But he who, torn and tempest-tossed,
And bravely struggling with his fate,
Finds a new life for that he lost.

(Anon).

It is easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows along like a song ;
But the man worth while is the one who will smile,
When everything goes dead and wrong.
For the test of the heart is trouble,
And it always comes with tears,
And the smile that is worth the praise of the
Earth,
Is the smile that comes through tears.

(Anon).

Do you wish the world were better ?
Let me tell you what to do.
Set a watch upon your actions,
Keep them always straight and true ;
Rid your minds of selfish motives ;
Let your thoughts be clear and high,
You can make a little Eden
Of the sphere you occupy.

(Anon).

The man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
Or thought of vanity ;
The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude
Nor sorrow discontent ;
That man neither needs towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From Thunder's violence.

(Anon).

Cowards die many times before their death ;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard
It seems to me most strange that man should fear,
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

(Anon).

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have
Not from great deeds, but good alone.
The unknown are better than ill known ;
Rumour can ope the grave.
Acquaintances I would have, but when't depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

(Anon).

I laugh not at another's loss ;
I grudge not at another's gain ;
My wealth is health and perfect ease ;
My conscience clear, my chief defence ;
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceits to breed offence :
Thus do I live, thus will I die,
Would all did so as well as I !

(Anon),

Whenever thou canst, give never pain to any other
Nor kindle fires of wrath his soul to smother.
If thou desire to taste a constant peace,
Vex thine own heart but never hurt another.

(Anon).

CHAPTER XII

LOVE

LOVE and beauty are inseparable twins. They are like two roses of the same branch, or two waves of the same ocean, meeting over and over again. Where there is beauty, there love is bound to make its obeisance on its threshold. Thus Háfiz :—

من ازان حسن روز افزون که یوسف داشت دانستم
که عشق از پرده عصمت برون آرد زلیخا را *

From the very day when Joseph's beauty began to make galloping strides, I knew
That Love was going to bring out Zulaikha from the veil of chastity.

The proportion of love coincides with that of beauty. The more the beauty, the more the love. Beauty is magnetic and it attracts love. If there is perfection in beauty, there is perfection in love. Love may be classified as physical and as divine. Who can be more beautiful than God, the Author of beautiful things and heart-captivating faces. The latter, however, are subject to decay, a mystery of which the cause is unknown to man. It is only

the love of God that is everlasting. The passions displayed by the Şúfis, or mystics, therefore claim an everlasting life. They have always their Beloved in God, and so their writings are always free from absurd and vulgar expressions. Their passions are pure, real, ravishing and burning with celestial fire.

Physical or human love is short-lived. Naturally it is generally stripped of that fire, vigour and durability which is possessed by love divine. The strength of the poetry of love depends exclusively on divine love. It is, therefore, an integral factor of mysticism. In no land have so many mystic poets existed as in Persia, and so no language in the world surpasses the Persian language in vigour, elegance and effect as far as the poetry of love is concerned. The Persian language is remarkably rich in descriptions of the higher and nobler passions. In mystic poetry the problems of deep contemplation, amounting to forgetfulness, self-sacrifice, anguish, complaint, waiting, separation and meeting, are analogous to those of the poetry of physical love; but they are nowhere better and more elaborately explained than by the mystics. The sufferings and calamities endured in life impart to the mystics the same sweet taste which a lover realizes in the antipathy of a mortal beloved.

Mystic poetry is characterized by expressions of the noblest and highest order. The poetry of human love burns with passions alluding to kissing,

embracing and other similar expressions which, comparatively speaking, fall into a low and immodest category. Mystic poetry embraces only those pure and transcendental thoughts, which are pregnant with the charms of ennobling love and which preserve the crystal flow of the stream of life from pollution.

Love is a magnetism born in the nature of man. It conquers the heart and creates in it something which causes spontaneous utterances of an inviting nature. Happiness and anguish, stormy fancies and restlessness, madness and self-consciousness are the paths that are to be traversed in love. But all these paths, though strewn with thorns, from a lover's point of view are beds of roses and the source of an indefinable ecstasy. Love begets thoughts which please the mind and creates noble passions. It effaces all the inward envy, enmity and other desires of a mean nature. A true lover begins to love his enemies. It leads to self-denial and self-effacement, and rises above all thoughts of wealth, and worldly glories. It is the source of courage and bravery, self-martyrdom, strength of will and determination, manliness and perseverance. A true lover never hates his rivals. He loves all alike. To him a friend of the beloved is his own friend. To him the riches and honours of the world are worthless, for he seeks the possession of his beloved. His glory is his own love. He loses all

greed for money and riches. All the mean tendencies of human nature are converted into virtue in a lover. Enmity changes into affection and regard : niggardliness turns into generosity : pride becomes humility : low-mindedness evolves into high-mindedness. In short, a true lover becomes the essence of all that is noble and good. Love asks for one beloved only on whom it may shower its best things and choicest blessings even unto an unknown future. This is why the Śūfis speak of a three-fold self-effacement : (i) *faná fi Alláh*, (ii) *faná fi Rasúl*, (iii) *faná fi Shaikh*, i.e. extinction in God, in the Prophet, in the Shaikh. All these forms lead individually to one common goal. They are used collectively to denote self-effacement in love. True love never cares for calamities. It is pleased to entertain sorrows. It is not only the shape and appearance that causes love but attractions as well that cannot be explained. It is never selfish. It discards cruelty, fraud, deception, hypocrisy, falsehood, want of mercy, and offensive, indifferent and crude behaviour. It entertains all the virtues it can acquire. A mystic lover sees in everything the wonders of God.

A Persian poet says :—

برگ درختان سبز در نظر هوشیار
 هر ورقه دفترست معرفت کردگار *

In the eye of the wise, the leaves of the green
trees
Are one by one a great record of the divine
knowledge.

In a word a mystic poet is the author of all
those ennobling details of love which characterize
inspired poetry.

Khayyám says :—

ای وائے بران دل که در و سوزے نیست
سودۀ زدۀ مہر دل افروزے نیست *
روزے کہ تو بے عشق بسر خواہی برد
ضایع ترا زان روز ترا روزے نیست *

Lamentable is the heart which has no burning
(for love),
And is not mad with the love of an heart-enliven-
ing sweetheart ;
If thou shouldest live a single day without love,
There is no other day more badly wasted by thee
than that day.

Compare the beautiful copulet of Zaibu'n-Nisá
Makhfi :—

بشکند دستے کہ خم در کردن یارے نہ شد
کور بہ چشمے کہ لذت کبیر دیدارے نہ شد *

May the hand be broken that did not twine round
a beloved's neck,
Blind be the eye that did not enjoy the sight of
beauty.

Khawāja Wazír says.—

صد جگ ہو وہ دل کہ جو درد آشنا نہو
 بہوئے وہ آنکہ حس سے کہ آنسو گرا نہو *

Better that the heart burst to pieces which is
 incapable of feeling the pain of others,
 That eye be better blind which has not shed a tear.

پیرا نہ سرم عشق تو در دام کشید
 ورنہ ز کجا دست من و حام بید *
 آن توہ کہ عقل داد حاذان بشکست
 و ان حامہ کہ صبر دوخت ایام درید *

Although I am worn out with age, Thy love has
 snared me,
 Otherwise, how could my hand catch hold of the
 cup of wine ;
 My love broke the repentance that wisdom taught
 me,
 And the cloth that patience stitched is torn asunder
 by the times

عشقے کہ مہجاری بود آتش نہ بود
 چون آتش نیم مرده تادش بود *
 عاشق داند کہ سال و ماہ و شب و روز
 آرام و قرار و محو و حوالبش نہ بود *

The worldly love has no lustre,
 Like a half-burnt coal it has no brightness,
 A lover should for years and months, day and
 night,
 Have neither rest, patience, nor food nor drink

Compare the following touching lines of Shífta :—

شاید اسی کا نام محبت ہی شیفتہ
 اک آگت سی ہی سینہ کے اندر لگی ہوئی *

It is perhaps that which they call love, O Shífta,
 Which is burning like fire in the breast.

Byron has taken the following view of love :—

Yes love, indeed, is light from Heaven,
 A spark of that immortal fire,
 With angels shared—by Alláh given,
 To lift from earth our low desires.

‘What to the bee in nature is merely colour and scent, and the marks or spots which show the right track to the honey, is to the human heart beauty and joy untrammelled by necessity. They bring a love-letter to the heart written in many-coloured inks.’¹

‘Bondage and liberation are not antagonistic in love. For love is most free and at the same time most bound. If God were absolutely free there would be no creation. The infinite Being has assumed unto himself the mystery of finitude. And in Him who is love the finite and the infinite are made one.’² ‘Now all else passes into oblivion : only this sweet symbol⁴ of the touch of the eternal love fills us with a deep longing. We realize that the palace of gold where we are has nothing to do

¹ Tagore, *Sadhana*, pp. 102-3.

² *Ibid.* p. 115.

with us—our deliverance is outside it—and there our love has its fruition and our life its fulfilment.’¹

Allen dealing with justice and love, he says —²
 ‘Justice being a divine principle, cannot contain any element of cruelty. All its apparent harshness is the chastening fire of love. Man himself, and not the law *per se*, has brought about all the afflictions which are working for his ultimate happiness and good. Love reigns supreme in the universe because justice is supreme. A tender and loving hand administers the rod of chastisement. Man is protected even against himself. Love and justice are one.’

Immortal love is the love of God. The everlasting life to which the soul aspires can only be attained when it bathes itself with all possible fervour and increasing interest, in the love of the Eternal and Immortal Lord of the creation. Love, love and love, and you will have the best fruits of life—an immortal life. Truth is love and love is God, and to secure an immortal life is to love God. Professor Stephen, on the Evolution of the Ideal of God,³ says: ‘The god of the highest civilization of to-day is still a further advance. All his divine nature, all his supreme and self-sufficing power remains in fullest measure, but to them is added a great paternal love for and providential care of his

¹ Tagore, *Sadhana*, p. 102 ² Allen *Men and Systems*, p. 44.

³ *Islamic Review*, August, 1915

creatures. From the god who was pictured as delighting in cruelty and punishment has been evolved the God of Compassion and Mercy—Alláhu'r-Raḥmánu'r-Raḥím. From the gods of polytheism and pantheism we have evolved the Great Ruler and Maker of all that is, the Great I Am, no longer to be approached in dreadful fear, but in loving trustfulness, for "God is beneficent towards all His creatures".¹ This is the perfection of the idea of a god, the highest point to which human intellect can attain in its search for the Great Creator, the most perfect idea of "The All-Powerful," the most comforting vision of "The Most Merciful God," the Lord of all that is created, "the Most Merciful, the King of the Day of Judgment." "

Maulána Rúmí's view of love is worth reading :—

So sure doth he love Alláh that his love
In one great flame hath swept away self-love.

Dr. Whymant, in *The Psychology of the Higher Morality*,² says : ' And yet, realizing to the full the significance of the natural law of cause and effect, the higher morality discards this view. In the Qur'án, we read :³ " We nourish and guard you, keeping in view the love of Alláh : we seek from you neither recompense nor thanks." No system of rewards and punishments is here. " Neither

¹ Súrtu'l-Insán (lxxvi) 9. ² *Islámic Review*, February, 1915.

³ Súratu'l-Insán (lxxvi) 9.

recompense nor thanks," but "keeping in view the illimitable love of Alláh." "Alá Hubbî is, like many of the phrases in the Qur'án, capable of a double interpretation. Its first meaning is "keeping in view the love of Alláh," and its other meaning may be given as "when food is needed most He gives it away." How this contrasts with the statement, "there is for them that do good a reward most glorious." Here there is no seeking of reward; it is sufficient to "keep in mind the illimitable love of God."

Maulána Jalálu'd-Din Rúmí says :—

My desire shall always be
 More to have than Needs decree,
 Even as gay Flowers I pluck
 New Spring Blossoms smile at me.
 And when sweeping through the skies,
 From swift spheres new Fires will rise,
 Only True immortal Love
 From Perfect Beauty doth arise.
 When all is still and the earth has gone to sleep,
 Wake Thou in me !
 When wearied with the day my tired eyes sink to
 rest,
 Wake Thou in me !
 When eyes in Paradise unsleeping guard me o'er
 As stars above,
 Dwell in my sightless eyes as my Dear Guest,
 O Wake ! Wake Thou in Me.
 And when the Dark of after-Life is here,
 And Love's smile dawns
 And draws me, Love-like, ever to thy Breast,
 Wake 'Thou in me !

Again Dr. Whymant¹ treats on Love and comments on the above verses thus

‘Has ever such a perfect Love been so perfectly expressed ?

The worker is concealed in the workshop : go you and see Him manifestly in the workshop.’²

To quote again Dr. Whymant³ ‘To be unconscious of the world, self, and everything save the Eternal is life, all else is unreal. This may seem very metaphysical and too difficult of comprehension for those who are not academicians, but a little thought will make it clear.

The greatest teachers of all are those who learn the philosophy of long-ago ages and thus accumulate the experience of centuries. ‘Umar, in varying mood, proved how transient are the joys of earth and, through our estimate of them enables us to see, with proper perspective, the real. Truly his philosophy is like that of “The Preacher”, when he says, “In much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth wisdom increaseth sorrow. . . . And how dieth the wise man ? As the fool. Therefore I hated life ; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous to me : for all is vanity and vexation of spirit. . . . There is nothing better for a

¹ *Islāmic Review*, article on ‘The psychology of the Persian philosophers,’ December 1915.

² Article, God in Nature, *Islāmic Review*, October 1915.

³ The Mysticism of the Rubá‘iyát of ‘Umar Khayyám, an article in the *Islāmic Review*, October, 1915.

The flame of 'Ishq Alláh breaks down all bars
And captive souls sets free,
All hurt and seared with mundane scars
And starved for want of love.

No longer dost Thou seem afar
Now Thou by love art known,
We drink so deep of 'Ishq Alláh
That we in Thee are lost.

From morn till night I can but think
Of Thee Alláh and love,
And with that magic bond I link
Myself with all mankind.

I walk about like one astray,
Quite drunk with heavenly wine,
How can I tear myself away
From Him who is within.

'Thou art myself', the lover cries
To that soul he adores,
'I never did exist', he sighs,
'But only Thou, Beloved'.

Love of my soul, O Lord Divine,
Engulfed in love, I'll drown
Inebriate in that heavenly wine,
No longer I—but Thou.

CHAPTER XIII

DEATH

KHAYYAM'S conception of death may be traced from the following quatrains:—

آن مرد بدم کردم بدم آید
 کس بدم مرا خوشتر از آن بدم آید *
 جان است مرا بعارفت داد *
 تسلیم کردم * وقت تسلیم آید *

I am not the man who fears death,
 For this fear to me from that side is more agree-
 able,
 The Lord has lent me this life,
 I shall resign (my soul) to Him when the time
 comes.

Compare Nasim:—

لگلی پیری بدم رخصت
 ز رختی حتی ہی ناتوانی *
 سربا ہی وشت لند مین
 دهن شان و رات می ہی آنی *

Old age has brought the message of departure,
 Weakness is gradually progressing;
 We have to sleep in the corner of a tomb,
 Yes! Yes! that night also has to come.

Compare Ma'súd :—

موت ہی باب حیات ابدی
کام آسان ہوا جاتا ہی * (مسعود)

Death is the gate of an eternal life ; my work is getting easier.

تماشا گاہ عالم کا بھی کیا غم
وہیں جانا ہی آئے تھے جہان سے *

Why should we mourn for this theatre of the world ? (for),
We have to return to where we came from.

سرچشمہ حیات ہی اپنی نوید قتل
یہہ اپنی زندگی ہی جو بے موت مر گئے *
The happy tidings of our assassination (by the beloved) is the fountain-head of our existence,
For to die this unnatural death is in fact our life.

وہ آئے دن کی سر پہ قیامت نہیں رہی
کنج لحد میں آ کے مصیبت نہیں رہی *
No more am I tormented by the perpetual troubles,
The bower of tomb has relieved me from calamities. (Ma'súd).

ہر بن مو سے نکلتی ہی محبت کی صدا
آخری ہچکھی پیام یار ہی لائی ہوئی *

The point of every hair is clamorous of love,
The last hiccough has brought with it the message of the beloved. (Ma'súd).

تہیں دم کے ساتھ ساتھ ہی دنیا کی آفتیں
مرے کے بعد کوئی شکست نہیں رہی *

The calamities of the world went hand in hand
with life,
All troubles have disappeared after death. (Ma'súd).

Khayyám says —

ار آتش آحرت بمیداری ناک
و ر آب بدامت نہ شدی ہرگز پاک *
چون باد اجل حراع عمرت بکشد
ترسم کہ ترا رنگت بپذیرد خاک *

Thou dost not fear the torments of hell,
The water of shame (i.e. tears of repentance) have
never made thee pure.
When the wind of death extinguishes the lamp of
thy life,
I am afraid, the earth will not accept thee for
shame !

So 'Irâqî in the following couplet —

نہ زمین سو سجده کردم و زمین ندا بر آمد
کہ مرا حراب کردی و در سجده ریائی * (عراقی)

When I laid myself prostrate on the earth in
prayer to God, a voice came forth from it,
Oh ! Thou hast spoiled me with thy hypocritical
prostration.

Khayyám says :—

تا ظن نه بري كه از جهان مي ترسم
 و ز مردن و از رفتن جان مي ترسم *
 مردن چو حقيقت است زان باكم نيست
 چون نيك نه زيستم ازان مي ترسم *

Do not think that I fear the world,
 Or that I fear death and the extinction of my life,
 Death is reality, I fear it not,
 I fear, because I did not lead a virtuous life.

There can be no nobler, better and higher aspiration of life than to lead it virtuously. What is called death is a reality. And reality is truth, which can never be hurtful. What hurts us the most, and what is really worth fearing is evil-doing and an improper life. The moral codes, in almost every religion that lead us to truth, insist on our keeping ourselves aloof from things likely to result in our destruction, both moral and material. First and foremost of all we must not violate the rights of others. Life, as it passes mysteriously, comes to an end some day or other. Why should it be misused? Why should it not be spent wisely, and in strict harmony with the moral codes of nature? People in fearing death commit a moral sin. They think that worldly pleasures and luxuries will be lost to them and that friends and relations will be no more with them. They will have to

part with their worldly belongings, concerns and resources. Their lot will be lonely, and their aspirations will pass away. There will be no one to help their children and look after those who are dependent on them. They think that their life alone is of interest or importance. They do not consider that this death simply carries them from this life to the next; that actually there is no death at all. It is simply a permanent transportation of the soul to the place from whence it came, and the restoration of the body to the elements. Could the thought that sends awe and fear to their trembling frame present itself to them daily, with the reality of things as they are, they would perhaps entertain the idea of death with bliss, for it is the idea that leads man, if he is sensible, to correct and improve himself. The mystics always picture to their eyes the angel of death standing by them, and this idea gets such a strong hold of their hearts that it suddenly startles them forcibly, if any temptation assails them. Yes, it is the thought of death that gives them power, help and support to stand invincible at this critical juncture. They conquer temptations. Their victory is of far greater importance than the victory in battles and subjugation of territories, for it is a moral victory. It is self-suppression; it is the lifting up of one's self from the world of darkness into that of light; it is the power which withholds us from the dangerous abyss of moral and

mental destruction into which so many fall. It is the thought of death that prompts us to develop and practise moral power and influence, so that we may acquit ourselves honourably when we bid farewell to this world.

Death! Sweet death! Thou givest unmolested tranquil sleep to the true. All human beings have, since the creation of the universe, been attacking thee. They contrive ingenious forms to protect themselves from thy strong grip. But can they succeed? Never. Theirs is a fantastical and most childish effort. Thou takest away every one at the destined hour, which no one knows. Thou art the command of the Creator. And so thou shouldest be obeyed and with all the intensity of pleasure that human beings can command. And there is no other alternative but to obey this command. Thou art the greatest and most powerful machinery of the administration of the universe. It is thou which organizeth life and makest man believe that there is a Power, the Greatest of all that we can perceive. It is thou, O death, who introduces us to that Power and we bend to it with a sincerity beyond description. If there were no death, who could believe in that Infinite Power, that All-Pervading Jehovah, Jove or Alláh. O death! Thou art the key to our lives. Thou art simple, unaffecting and truthful. Thou visitest everything at the destined hour. But all along, with this simplicity

and the plainness of thy action, thou art an undiscoverable mystery. Thou art an arrow that never fails. The oriental poets call the eye-lashes of a beloved thy arrows. But thou killest with thy arrow without distinction, whether it be a lover or a beloved, the tyrant or the innocent, young or old, weak or powerful. Thy sceptre administers equal justice to all. And thou also wilt meet that justice one day from Him, who is Eternal and Everlasting, who has no beginning and no end

O death ! Thou art an angel of goodness. Thou relievest the afflicted from sufferings ; and the poor and the innocent from the ruthless hands of tyrants. Thou art a chivalrous knight. Thou givest a chance to the fools who long for false glory, power and splendour, and do not think of the after-life. Yes, fools they are, for they, in their blinding ambitions, do not dream for a moment that thou wilt visit them also some day or other, and give them a sleep from which no earthly power, but only the trumpet of resurrection, can awaken them. Thou partest a lover from the beloved to impress upon her the beauties of unrequited and true love. Thou art an instructor with knowledge unattainable by mortal and arrogant heads. And thou tramplest upon those who care not for thee, but, in the prime and vigour of their youth, have their own way with evil passions of their misused powers. Thou makest us believe with full and honest conviction that He,

the Supporter of the needy and of His distressed creatures, will stand by those whom thou separatest us from. Thou givest real and permanent faith in Him. Thou impartest to us divine love, which smooths the course of our life and puts before us ideals noble, congenial, natural and transcendental, which protects us from all that is inhuman, and from the vanities of the wicked and the unhappy world.

O death! I have eulogized thee greatly and I fear lest thou shouldest become vain. I cast thee and thy thought aside. I make light of thee. Thou art only a command of the All-Powerful, Merciful and Most Compassionate God; but since that is so, I am willing to embrace thee from the depth of my heart in order to please Him and to win the favour and compassion of Him, who is my Master and to me all that is best and noble.

I now compare other writings also on the subject of death :—

And say not of those who are slain on God's path
but they are dead; nay, they are living,¹
There is no death; what seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

(Longfellow.)

Whate'er exists within this universe
 Is all to be regarded as enveloped
 By the Great Lord as if wrapped in a vesture
 Who, like the air, supports all vital action,
 The Universal Spirit no part of whom can die
 (Rig Veda)

Indestructible,
 Learn thou, the life is spreading life through all,
 It cannot anywhere, by any means,
 Be anywise diminished, stayed or changed.
 But for these fleeting frames, which it informs
 With spirit, deathless, endless, infinite,
 They perish
 (Bhagwad-gita)

Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease
 to be, never,
 Never was time it was not; end and beginning are
 dreams;
 Birthless and deathless, and changeless the spirit
 remaineth for ever; death hath not touched it
 at all, dead though the house of it seems
 (Bhagwad-gita.)

Death is a path, that must be trod,
 If man would ever pass to God.
 No heart that holds one right desire
 Treadeth the road of loss; he who should fail
 Desiring righteousness, cometh at death
 Unto the region of the just.
 (Bhagwad-gita)

He only lives who liveth well;
 The evil-doer hath but a living death.
 A good life bringeth a good death.
 (Anon)

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not
breaths;

In feelings, not in figures on a dial,

We must count time by heart-throbs; he most
lives

Who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best.

(Bailey.)

If there is but one song that I can sing,

But one word that I can say

To cheer the world or comfort the world,

Let me utter them while I may;

For who shall be soothed by the silent note

Of the song that remains unsung,

Or gather joy from the voiceless words

That sleep on a dead man's tongue?

(Anon.)

It is one of the wise and evident uses of sudden death that we may so live with our friends that, come when and how it will, we may not add to the grievous loss the self-reproach of unkindness or neglected duties.

Guard well our tongues: no one can e'er

Recall a word that's once been spoken;

Wound not a friend: no balm can heal

A faithful heart that's once been broken.

(Anon.)

گر صد هزار لعل و گهر میدهمی چه سود
دل را شکسته نه که گوهر شکسته *

It is no use if thou givest a hundred thousand
rubies and pearls,

For thou hast broken a heart and not a pearl.

(Anon.)

Death borders upon our birth, and
Our cradle stands in the grave.

(Bishop Hall.)

Years following years steal something every day,
Until they steal us from ourselves away.

(Pope.)

Life, we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather ;
'Tis hard to part, when friends are dear,
Perhaps 'twill cause a sigh, a tear ;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose your own time,
Say not good night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me good morning.

(Mrs. Barbauld)

Alas for love if thou wert all
And not beyond, O earth.

(Mrs. Hemans.)

پتوں تو دو دن بہار جعرا دُبُتِ کئے

حسرت اور غمچون پتہ ہی جو بے کہلے مرجھا گئے

As to flowers—they have displayed their enlivening
attraction of spring for a couple of days,
Lamentable are those buds which have withered
without blooming.

(Anon.)

Whoso dieth, believing firmly that there is no other
to be worshipped but God, will enjoy eternal
bliss

(Hadith by the Khalifa 'Uthmān.)

‘Death is that stage of life, in which the soul passes from the physical into the non-physical. The soul is immortal. . . . The knowledge of the past—the knowledge gained in the physical world is with it. . . . After its departure from the body, the soul is first questioned as to the existence of God, and the mission of life. This examination is conducted by two angels in the grave. The soul is there. If it could ever remain in the body it can also remain present with it, whenever required. If the examination is successful, that is, if the soul is a knowing soul, rest and peace are administered to it.’¹

¹ Muhammad Sarfaráz Husain, *Qārī, Islām*, p. 91.

CHAPTER XIV

MORAL TEACHINGS

KHAYYAM's philosophy of morals is very brief, but whatever he has left to posterity is quite enough to serve as a guide in this brief and evanescent life

عینت مکن و دل کسار را مزار
در عهده آن حسن مدم درد بیدر *

Do not backbite and do not injure the hearts of
others,
I am involved in the cares of the next world bring
me wine

بد حواد کس هیچ به مقصد نرسد
بک بد به کند تا محروش صد نرسد *
من بیک تو خواهم و تو خواهی بد من
تو بیکت به نیستی و به من بد نرسد *

No evil wisher of men realizes his object,
Let none commit one bad action lest a hundred
evils are caused in return
I wish thee good and thou desirest me evil,
Thou dost not perceive that good and not evil is
caused me thereby

تر شادي از آن خویشتن میدانی
 کاسروده دل را به غمی بنشانی *
 در ماتم غل خویش بنشین هم، عمر
 پندار عذیبت به عجب نادانی *

If thou thinkest that pleasure is limited to thyself
 only,
 And thou causest sorrow to a contented man,
 (Then) sit all thy life mourning thy common-sense,
 (And) feel it a calamity, for thou art a wonderful
 fool.

ای آنکه خلعه چهار ارکانی
 بشنو سخنی ز عالم روحانی *
 دبوئی و ددی و ملک انسانی
 باتست هر آنچه بی نمایی آنی *

O thou who art the essence of the four elements,
 Hear a word from the shades,
 Thou art a demon, a fierce quadruped and an angel
 in human form,
 It rests with thee to be whatever thou likest to
 show thyself to be.

It rests with man to turn himself to anything he
 likes. He may be a fiend, a tyrant, or he may be
 pious and a model of humanity. It lies within
 himself to mould his character as he likes. All the
 religions and experience teach this. But the pur-
 view of religion is confined. Some religions teach

us that goodness, charitable acts, obligation, sympathy, support and encouragement should be, as far as possible, done in the circle of co religionists 'Umar khayyam is more generous He loves nature to the full and follows its example He is kind to all alike, just as bounteous nature is To him the light of the sun illuminates the whole world; it falls on a jungle a desert, a garden, a thorny bush, a bed of lovely flowers, a cottage and a palace alike 'This is why' in the words of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, 'the Upanishads describe those who have attained the goal of human life as "peaceful" and as "at one with God" meaning that they are in perfect harmony with man and nature, and therefore in undisturbed union with God'¹

در راہ بیار ہر دلے را درباب

* در کوئے حضور مقلے را درباب

صد کعبۂ آب و گل نہ بک دل نرسد

* کہم چہ روی برو دلے را درباب *

In the path of humility captivate every heart,
In the street of the Lord, seek a devoted guide.
A hundred Kā'bas of water and clay are inferior to
a heart,
Why dost thou go to the Kā'ba? Go and win a
heart.

¹ Sadhāna *The Realization of Life* p 15

Maulána Jámí has explained it in beautiful verses which have become proverbial :—

دل بدست آور که حج اکبر است
 از هزاران کعبه یک دل بهتر است *
 کعبه بنگاه خلیل آذر است
 دل گذرگاه خلیل اکبر است *

Win a heart, for it is the greater Hajj,
 One heart is better than a thousand Ka'bas,
 Ka'ba was founded by Abraham son of Ázar,
 The heart is the thoroughfare of the Great God.

Lord Headley quotes a Hadíth, or a tradition of a saying or of an action of the Prophet, in his *A Western Awakening to Islám* thus : ' What are most excellent actions ? To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful and to remove the wrongs of the injured '. Henri Bergson says : ¹ ' Respect for the opinion of others is not to be acquired without sustained effort ; and I know no more powerful ally in the overcoming of that intolerance which is a natural instinct than philosophic culture. Aristotle said that in a republic where all the citizens were lovers of knowledge and given to reflection they would all love another. He

¹ Bergson : *His Life and Philosophy*, p. 15.

did not mean by this, I take it, that knowledge puts an end to dispute, but rather that dispute loses its bitterness and strife its intensity when lifted into the realm of pure thought—into the world of tranquillity, measure and harmony.'

دشمن و دوست فعل نیکو بدکو است
 بد کئے کد آئیکہ بیکیش عادت اوست *
 نادوست حرد کنی شود دشمن تو
 ددشمن اگر بیک کنی گردد دوست *

A good deed is good, be it with a friend or a foe,
 A good natured man never commits evil,
 If thou committest evil to a friend, he will turn thy
 enemy,
 If thou doest good to an enemy, he is reconciled

نامردم پاک اصل و عاقل آمیز
 و ربا اہل ہزار در سنگت کرر *
 گر رہر دہد ترا حرد مند نوش
 و رہر نوش رسد ر دست نا اہل کرر *

Mix with men of good birth and the wise,
 Flee a couple of thousand miles from the ignorant,
 If a wise man gives thee poison, drink it,
 And if thou getest a drink from the hand of one
 who is ignorant, flee from it

Compare Sa'dí :—

ز جاہل گریزندہ چون تیر باش
نیامیختہ چون شکر شیر باش *

Shoot away like an arrow from the company of the
ignorant,
Do not mix with them like sugar and milk.

CHAPTER XV

HYPOCRISY

KHAYYÁM looks upon hypoerisy as the worst of crimes. He has laid bare the misdeeds and the inner feelings of those hypocrites, who are a disgrace to humanity and who commit mischief in the garb of polemic religionists. Si'di and Hafiz have very bravely attacked the scheming priests and the orthodox of the hypocritical class. They have shown their characters in different and rare expressions and ways; but Khayyám has summed it all up in one quatrain —

راحد نه زن فاحشه گفتا مستی
 تکرر که نکستی و درن پیوستی *
 زن گفت چنانکه می نمایم هستم
 تو دیر چنانکه می نمائی هستی *

A religious man said to a woman of loose character
 'Thou art a rogue,
 Just see what thou hast given up and what hast
 thou adopted?'
 'I am what I show myself to be', answered the
 woman, 'but Art thou the same what thou pre-
 tendeth to be?'

There can be no more suitable and more convincing illustration of the broad and intelligible difference that exists between the outer and the inner man. Pure deeds, pure thoughts and pure words should correspond with one another. The discrepancy between the inner and the outer man, is a thing most abominable and the blackest form of wickedness. *Khayyám* has dealt with this in an intelligent manner. He has used the most effective and distinctive mode of expression. He has reflected upon the causes of such hypocrisy, and, therefore, teaches us to keep our inner and outer nature the same and to abstain from inconsistency and pretentiousness.

He says :—

در راه چنان رو که سلامت نه کنند
 با خلق چنان زی که قیامت نکنند *
 در مسجد اگر روی چنان رو که ترا
 در پیش نه خوانند و امامت نکنند *

So walk thy way that no one bows to thee,
 So Live with the people that no one stays (to pay
 homage to thee),
 If thou goest to a mosque, go in a way that no one
 Asks thee to go forward and act as Imám.¹

¹ The Imám in a mosque is the leader of the Namáz, or prayers.

Khavyam asks us to pass our life quietly, and plainly ; with simplicity and without the least touch of affectation so that people may not look upon us as sants or as holy persons. It is the evident truth that when a man is considered to be pious, he resorts to all sorts of practices to maintain his dignity and to spread far and wide the odour of his sanctity. But he cannot do all this without a show of ceremony and exaggerated formalities. If he had not brought himself to this apparently pious stage in order to be revered by the people, he could have led a simple unostentatious life, stripped of all affected formalities.

Khavyam's philosophy has a higher import than that of the so called orthodox and the theologians. The views of this sacred sect are confined within the arena of religious commandments. The theologians test the actions of man by applying to them the religious codes and by trying to find out whether the actions involve the doer in penalties or rewards in the future life. If they are thoroughly satisfied that the nature of the act will exempt them from a future penalty, they will not at all worry themselves with any further investigation. They will never go deep into the matter. Their standpoint is that of a purely formal religion. They have nothing to do with the real aim and object of the religious codes. Their ideal is the superficial adherence to religion.

Khayyám wants to find out the real nature of an act and the *bona fide* or the *mala fide* character of the doer of such an act. The motive is the main point. If he thinks that it is wicked, the idea of being pardoned by the divine decree imparts to him little consolation. To him the most tremendous sin is that God is witnessing its commission, and that he is the author of such an act. Accordingly he says :—

با نفس همیشه در نبردم چه کنم
 وز کرده خویشتن بدردم چه کنم *
 گیرم که ز من در گذرانی به کرم
 زین شرم که دیدی که چه کردم چه کنم *

I have always fought against my unlawful passions
 successfully : what shall I do ?
 I am uneasy with the pain of my commission ;
 what shall I do ?
 Granted that Thou pardonest me out of Thy com-
 passion,
 But what remedy is there for the very shame I feel
 that Thou sawest the act done ?

پندے د ہمت اگر ہمی داری گوش
 از بہر خدا جائے تذویر مپوش *
 عقبی ہمہ ساعت است و دنیا یکدم
 از بہر دمے مالک ابد را مفروش *

I advise thee, provided thou listeneth to me,
For God's sake do not put on the cloak of hypo-
crisy.

The next life is for ever and this world transitory,
Do not sell the everlasting empire for a moment

Khayyám very clearly describes the real object of life. To him as a philosopher-mystic, the sorrows and pleasures of this life have little value, if they are the outcome of one's own actions. He realizes with honest conviction the unreliable nature of life. The vision of the after life has its own metaphysical charms. Khayyám is not at all pleased with the comforts of life and the realization of such objects through hypocrisy. To him the evolution of soul, the spirit or the mind, is the chief aim and object of existence. He seeks truth and earnestly desires his fellow-creatures to abide by it. In truth only he finds everything dignified and beautiful. He believes that the present life is a preamble to the next world and it should not be ruined in the snares of hypocrisy. He desires us to kill our baser self, to control our evil desires, as the Spiritual Guide ordains *Mútú qabala anta mútú*, i.e. Die before you die.

پوشده مرقع اند اس حایمے چند

بارفته ره صدق و صفا کایمے چند *

نگرفته رطامات اَللّٰه لایمے چند

بد نام کسده نگر نامے چند *

These few raw men have worn their (Darwísh)
 patched habit,
 They have not walked a few paces on the path of
 truth and sincerity,
 They are quite ignorant and pretend to know a lot,
 They abuse the name of those few who are good.

The poet again refers to those of the orthodox community who, in order to attain their worldly wishes, endeavour to apply the letter and not the spirit of religious codes to legalize what is actually forbidden. It is a hit at the *mala fide* character of such scholars, who resort to formalities only, who are impressed by outward appearances and who do not care to find out the real nature and truth of things as they actually are. Our poet attaches great importance to the search of truth, to the strictest coincidence of the inner and the outer man, to the correspondence which should exist in actions, thoughts and words. Khayyám thinks that the lack of sincerity and the merely external mode of life have little value, although the theologians are extremely particular about the latter. Accordingly he says:—

با تو به خوابات اگر گویم راز
 به زانکه به محراب کنم بی تو نماز *
 ای آول وای آخر خلقان همه تو
 خواهی تو مرا بسوز و خواهی بنواز *

If I tell Thee a secret in a drunken state,
It is better than to say my prayers in the mihrab
(arch in a mosque) without Thee (i. e. praying
without contemplating God and merely reciting
the words of prayer)

O Thou, the first without a beginning, and the ever-
lasting of all Thy creation,
As Thou wilt, burn me or pardon me'

Again, he sings in the same strain —

می خوردن و کرد نیکوان گردیدن
 بدر آنکه بزرگ راهی و زریدن *
 گر عاشق و مست در درخی خواهد بود
 پس روی بهشت کس نخواهد دیدن *

To drink wine and keep company with the good
Is better than adopting the hypocrisy of a (seem-
ingly) religious man,

If a lover and a drunkard are doomed to hell,
None shall, therefore, see the portals of Paradise

The orthodox community, or the veterans of religious law, (who observe very strictly its superficial aspect) deem it incumbent on a person to observe all those outward formalities in appearance and dress, which distinguish him from others of a different denomination or persuasion. Those who are strictly orthodox resort to a special form of dress and appearance. Khayyâm's sincerity makes it more desirable that one's outward appearance and thoughts should be in strict consonance. What he considers to be abominable is the keeping up of false appearances. He admits the evil of

wine, but he would prefer an honest drunkard who keeps company with the good, who tries to find out the truth and who admires beautiful actions to a hypocrite priest. In the last two lines of the quatrain just quoted, he takes a mystic turn which is the beauty of his style. He lays down a formula that one who is mad with the divine love, even if he be a drunkard, is bound to attract God's mercy and compassion and attain salvation. There is a section of Darwishes who lead a sort of life stripped of all its formalities, and almost unconscious of everything pertaining to the material world. The 'Ulamá discard these people, because they transgress the limits of divine laws; but Khayyám likes them for their sincerity of purpose. In short the life of a true devotee of God is not based on fear or greed or outward ceremonies.

در مدرسه و صومعه و دیر و کنشت

* ترسنده ز دوزخ اند و جویائی بهشت *

آن کس که از آسرار خدا با خبر است

* ز بن تخم در اندرون دل هیچ نه کشت *

In school, house of worship, temple of idols and
 temple of the fire-worshippers,
 All fear the torments of hell and seek after
 paradise,
 The man who is conversant with the mysteries of
 the Lord,
 Did cultivate nothing of this seed in his heart.

CHAPTER XVI

KHAYYÁM AND THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

KHAYYÁM'S philosophy, his moral teachings and his far-sighted views are convincing enough to enable us to form an idea of the opinion he held about the orthodox community. He says quite rightly :—

با این دو سه نادان که چنان • می دانند
از جهل که دانایی جهان ایشانند *
خوش باش که از خرد ایشان به مثل
هر گونه خراست کافرش • می خوانند *

With these few fools who understand

On account of their ignorance that they are the
only wise men in the world,

Be happy, that owing to their ass-like folly, as the
proverb goes,

• They call him, who is not an ass, an unbeliever or
infidel.

It is a matter worth consideration that men like Imám Ghazálí, Imám Rází, Muḥiyyu'd-Din 'Arábi and Shaikh 'l-Ishráq have not escaped the tremendous attacks of this religious set. These go so far as to proclaim any one with liberal and broad

views an infidel. Posterity has afterwards known the sterling worth of these learned scholars and deeply lamented the shocking conduct of those who parade as the pillars of religion. It is on this basis that Khayyâm makes this pertinent remark that the so-called pretenders and prejudiced scholars of religion call a free-thinker an infidel, who, in fact, is not so senseless as they are. The real fact is that Khayyâm's poetical writings were too superior to be comprehensible to the ordinary or fettered mind.

Khayyâm has taken notice of them in the mask of a poet; but even a man of independent views, as he was, dared not reveal the mysteries shrouding the reality of things. He says:—

آسرار جهان چنانکه در دفتر ماست

* گفتن نتوان که آن و بل سر ماست *

جون نیست درین مردم دنیا اہلے

* نتوان گفتن ہر آنچه در خاطر ماست *

The mysteries of the world, as they are on our record,

Cannot be revealed, as this would prove a calamity to us ;

As there is no capable being in this world,

That which lies hidden in our breast cannot be brought to light.

It is really a matter of considerable regret that the high-handedness of the surface worshippers of things has forced to lie buried innumerable mysteries, wonderful realities and untold truths in the breasts of those who were real seekers after truth, who were independent in their views, and who nurtured their head and heart in the atmosphere of toleration and in perfect harmony with divine love. These treasures have been buried with these outspoken, harmless, independent, truthful and perfect models of humanity.

When this surface-worshipping set of the 'Ulamá, for their own worldly interest and aggrandizement, passed a verdict that Khayyám was an infidel or an irreligious man, he wrote the following quatrain —

نامن تو ہر اچندہ کوئی اور کین کوئی
 پیوستہ مرا ماحد و بیدین کوئی *
 من خود معرم ہر اچندہ کوئی ہستم
 اذصاف ندہ تر ارسد کین کوئی *

Whatever thou callest me, thou doest it out of
 envy,
 Thou callest me an embodiment of atheism and
 irreligion,
 I confess that I am whatever thou sayest about me,
 Do justice (by this confession of mine), evil speak-
 ing falls to thy share.

It is a simple truth that even the dust of those, who in their life-time wanted to injure the reputation

of Khayyám, is not traceable for they have left their names only for posterity to spurn; yet Khayyám stands to-day, after a period of eight hundred years, a perfect model of humanity and genius, liberal and tolerant. It is a great mistake to interpret Khayyám's quatrains in a way different to what is their real import. Those who have understood him call him a great mystic and remember him with benedictions, craving the mercy and peace of the Lord on him. To pass an unfavourable verdict against him, merely on the literal meaning of his verses, is nothing more than blind folly and unpardonable ignorance. Most of the Persian poets express their passions for divine love in technical language, which, if judged literally, would mean a great injustice to their writings. Love, wine and Sáqí¹ have frequently formed the subject-matter of Persian verses written by poets of eminence.

Love and wine are the substantial attributes of Oriental poetry, and it is the effect of these two attractions which make the verses fascinating. The beauty of Khayyám's quatrains, apart from many other fascinations of the art, lies to a considerable extent in love, Sáqí and the crimson cup of wine.

Khayyám was one of those mystics who, in search of truth, knock down the outward barriers of formal

¹ Sáqí means cup-bearer, one who brings the wine.

religion and seek consolation in the ravishing thought of the one Almighty Creator. To call him an atheist or an unbeliever means blindness in broad day-light. He believes in one God, in the Prophet (everlasting peace and the choicest blessings of God be on him), believes in the Day of Resurrection, in rewards and punishments to be meted out on the Day of Judgment. With the fervour of humility embracing a great divine love, he repeatedly confesses that he, like all other human beings, is sinful. He repents in the most effective and sincerest way. He knows and makes us also believe that God only knows the mysteries unknown to human beings. He believes with thorough conviction that His will must be done. These are the great principles underlying religion and prove that Khayyam had a heart in his breast that beat with perfect divine love in the most rational manner. Its vibrations remind us of the great principle underlying the couplet of the poet of genius, Ghalib, as below —

ہم موجد ہں ہمارا کیس ہی ترک رسوم
ملتین حب مثکن احرائے ایمان ہو گئیں (علی)

We are monotheists, it is our characteristic to give up conventionalities,

All religions, on their death, have become the ingredients of our faith

It is an instance of supernaturalism, characterized in the writings of Dante and which, in the

words of Mr. George Santayana, may be explained as 'the raptures of a perfect conformity with the will of God and of union with Him.'¹ This realization of and absorption in Oneness is the chief and final destination of the mystics,—the highest attainment which the Şúfís aspire to both in theory and in practice. It is the chief aim and object of life: it is the divine nectar which all the messengers of God have tasted and drunk, and it is the sum and substance of all religions and ethical teachings. It is that exclusive Oneness which constituted the mission of the Prophet of Arabia and other various Prophets (peace be on them) before him, and which has been most frequently mentioned in the Holy Testament of the Muslims.

The following quatrains lead us to study Khayyám in the true spirit of his poetical writings:—

بتخانه و كعبه خانه بندگي است
 ناقوس زدن ترانه بندگي است *
 محراب و كليسا و تسبيح و صليب
 حقا كه همه نشانه بندگي است *

The temple of idols and the Ka'ba are houses of worship,
 The blowing of a conch is the music of worship,
 The arch, the tabernacle, and the beads, and the cross,
 Truly, these are all the symbols of devotion.

¹ Santayana, *The Three Philosophical Poets*, p. 6.

The mystics absorbed thoroughly in divine contemplation think that everything in the universe is a factor of the All-Pervading Infinite. It is that Oneness which they believe in, seek, know and realize.

There are eight stages in the mystic Path—at-Ṭariqat—of the Ṣufis. They are Service (ʿAbūdiyyat); Love (ʿIshq), Seclusion (Zuhd), Knowledge (Maʿrifat), Ecstasy (Wajd or Hāl); Truth (Haqiqat), Union (Wash); Extinction (Fana).¹ In the second stage the Ṣufis love one God, and in their deep love forget their own-self, and passing through the several stages at last become so absorbed in the One, so united (wash) with the Divine that whatever they do or perceive or are conscious of it is only that All-Pervading One. Whatever they cast their looks upon is that One, and this Oneness is their final goal. If they find joy in anything it is in the contemplation of that One, and, at last, nothing but that One remains to them.

This process of self-effacement in God seems to have been derived from that Eastern Majnūn, the lover of Layla. He used to cry first, 'I love Layla.' Later on the anguish developed into the cry 'I am Layla' and in the third stage, the word 'I' or self-consciousness became extinct and the cry echoed everywhere with the breath of Majnūn, 'Layla'

¹ For a description of these stages see Sell, *The Faith of Islam* (4th ed.), pp. 160-2

Layla ! Layla !' Thus the dualism was lost into oneness, or the beloved.

از خالق کردگار و از رب رحیم
 نوید عشو بجرم عصیان عظیم *
 گر هست و خراب و مرده باشی امروز
 فردا بخشد بر استخوان هائے رمیم *

Of that Creator, the Lord of all, and of that Most
 Compassionate God,
 Do not be disappointed, because of the vastness of
 thy sins ;
 If thou art inebriate, profligate and dead to-day,
 The Merciful God will grant His grace to (thy)
 rotten bones to-morrow.

This quatrain shows that the poet does believe in the Day of Judgment, in justice and rewards. Our poet, at the same time, has an intense belief in the surging compassion of the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate God and has convinced and sanguine hope that He will pardon us all.

ساقی قدحے کہ هست عالم ظلمات
 جز روئے تو نیست در جهان آب حیات *
 از جان و جهان و هر چه در عالم هست
 مقصود توئی و بر محمد صلوات *

O Sâqî ! give me a cupful of wine for the world is
all darkness
Nothing but thy face in the world is the medium of
an eternal life,
Life, world and everything in the universe has for
its object Thee and on Muhammad be Thy bless-
ings

یک یک هرم بس و گنه ده ده بخش
هر حرم ده رب حسنة الله به بخش *
ار ناد هوا آتس کنس را مغرور
ما را نه سر حاک رسول الله بخش *

Examine each and all of my good deeds and pardon
my hundred faults
Every offence I have committed pardon it for Thy
own sake
To fulfil Thy desire do not kindle the fire of
vengeance
Pardon our faults for the sake of Muhammad's
body Thy Prophet

ای دل جو جفعت جهان هست به حار
چندس چه نری حواری ارس ربح و مدار *
تس را نه نص سنا و د وقت سنا
کنس زنده فلم زهر نو دند در *

O heart when the reality of the world is artificial,
How long wilt thou suffer indignity from this
sorrow and humiliation
Entrust thyself to God's will and make the most of
the present
For what has once been recorded (in thy fate)
cannot be changed for thee

There is no gainsaying the fact that he, who does not waste his time in indolence, does not yield to sorrows and disappointments; but does his duty with an unflinching determination, braves the dangers in life with an indomitable courage, uses his conscience as the guiding light to the thorny and dreary paths of life, works with an indefatigable energy and resoluteness and depends on the Creator for success. Such an one is sure to reach his goal and gain a real victory. And, if perchance, he meets failure, in spite of his doing all that he could do to cross the insurmountable barriers in his way, let him not allow himself to be disheartened with failure and disappointment, but resign himself with absolute submission to the will of God and believe that such was ordained by God. Man is really helpless, but at the same time he has been endowed by God with certain faculties and capabilities, and he is bound to make use of them, to develop them rightly.

The world was created for evolution. Every man was intended for the performance of his individual duty. Every nation, community, country and empire was meant to perform the high dictates and injunctions of the All-Powerful Deity. All are expected to do their duty conscientiously and with absolute honesty and morality. If we were meant to shift our evil deeds and our religious or moral sin on to the shoulders of others, there would be

words 'Ba wáqt besáz' (make the most of thy time, or, more literally speaking, be amicable with the time or times) teach us all the lesson of universal altruism. This simple but broad expression can be explained in numerous and different ways to suit every class of people, viewed from their own standpoint, and to turn the moments of this short and uncertain life to the best advantage. The import of these words, clothed in plain and simple language, connotes a philosophy of sombre majesty. It is full of resplendent and practical maxims for saving oneself from fallacious doctrines and farcial dogmas, and it can be safely and successfully applied to the universal good of humanity, irrespective of any caste, creed, country or nation. And there is every hope that, if this application is honest and sincere, success is guaranteed. And what is success? It is the regular and persistent use of one's faculties in an organized form in the particular direction that suits one's taste. It is the unflinching determination, indefatigable energy and untiring and running patience that makes a man 'the man' of his day. It is the best use of one's life that blossoms into success after years' methodical use of life. 'We must needs resign ourselves,' says Henry Bergson,¹ 'to know only a few things if we would not be ignorant in all.' . . . 'The best way to

¹ *An account of his Life and Philosophy*, p. 4.

succeed is not to aim too early at success'. The nobility and worth of life cannot be possibly attained without the best use of one's faculties, with consistent and never-failing endeavour. The poet advises us to resign ourselves to the will of the Author of our being, that is to say, to depend on him for success in life and exert ourselves to the full to be in possession of such success, and not despair, for everything is destined an hour for itself'.¹ Only do your duty and do it as honestly and conscientiously as you can, for as the Arab poet Abu'l-'Ala, the famous Arab poet of Kufa, sang —

Get sons for death, build houses for decay,
And all ye wend annihilation & wry
For whom build we, who must ourselves return
Into our native element of clay.²

The world is fleeting and unreliable, the bird of time is flying with a mysterious speed never to return again. It flies and flies onward and does not care to look back. So appreciate the present moments that are like shadows. For as Parkinson says,³ 'Things are being continually re moulded. Every atom in the universe is in motion. Compounds are eternally dissolving and being externally created, remoulded anew into fresh forms in the matrix of the universe. Change, continual change, is the key note of all experience, the determining

¹ *Saratu'l-Qamar* (ib.) 49

² *Shadows Islamic Review*, June 1915

factor in evolution and progress in all its aspects. Matter and force ever in motion and action, form ever evolving into form.'

Whatever good you do to others in your passing life, whatever charitable works you do for the comfort and betterment of humanity, or to the coming posterity, you are practically doing good to your own individual self.

But to gain the immortal life, requires our strictest adherence to what is good and noble and our never-failing energy in the utilization of our time.

تا در تن تست اُستخوان و رگ و پنه

از خانهٔ تقدیر منه بیرون یسے

گردن منه ار خصم بود رستم زال

مذمت مکش ار دوست بود حاتم طے *

As long as there exists in thee a bone, a vein and a walking leg,

Do not step out of the premises of fate,

Surrender not even if thy enemy is Rustam son of Zál,

Be under no obligation to a friend though he be the Hátim of Tái.

With the sage-like inspiration of a prophet of the olden times, Khayyám defies ten thousand enemies and welcomes everything that fate has in store for

him, for in it he sees what is ordained by God. He is confident of his own innate powers, and his own moral and physical courage. He is not prepared to be under an obligation to any friend whatever, for in God only he sees his true friend. He lays down a code of moral aesthetics, an ethical law for humanity in the circumscribed arena of four lines, for the battle-field of life. He feels it derogatory to his position as a man to shine in borrowed plumes. He would exert his own energies to the full, would make use of his own talents without relying on any mortal. Unbefriended he would himself shape his future and leave his success or failure to the mercy and compassion of the Creator. He is confident of his own resources of head and heart. He welcomes everything that comes to him in life with a serene and dignified composure. He cares not for his enemies and is prompt in action to meet whatever misfortunes and calamities are waiting for him. With contemptuous derision, he looks upon the harrowing mishaps he may possibly meet with in life. He sets an example to others of reliance on one's own conscience, on one's own strength of will and determination, for man is born to fight single-handed in the battle of life. To perform one's duties with self-confidence and dependence on one's own individual efforts and resources is his motto. To shrink from duty is an intolerable sin in his eyes.

زان پیش که از جام اجل مست شوی

زیر لگد حادثه ها پست شوی *

سرمایه بدست آر درین ره گنجها

سودے نه کند اگر تهید دست روی *

Before thou art drunk with the cup of death
And down-trodden by the kicks of events,
Gather in this world thy resources for the life to
come
For nothing there can turn to thy advantage if thou
goest empty-handed.

Here is another ennobling advice of great importance to mankind to do all they can for their regeneration, before the relentless hand of death takes hold of them. Our poet most affectionately places before us the conventional problems of life, which we can never do away with. The appealing cadence of reality warns us to open our eyes to the consciousness and the true realization of what we call duty in this life. These lines present to our vision the serious responsibilities binding on us, both from a temporal and spiritual point of view. The quatrain most plainly calls us to realize that a life has to come after death, and to treat this world as an institution for the theoretical and practical development of moral and spiritual laws, which govern the real life of man. It is in this world that we have to sow the seed of higher and nobler ideals

to serve us in the world to come. What is this world? It is a stage, where we have to perform our respective parts, where we have to exercise and foster our various faculties for the attainment of a higher life, to observe self-restraint and self-denial, in order to approach the beautiful and thus acquire the immortality of the soul. Our wealth lies in the performance of our daily duties honestly and conscientiously, in the discharge of those obligations to our relations, friends and others, which Providence has imposed upon us. Life does not consist in the outward show of dress, comfortable living, the hoarding of wealth and the use of our physical superiority to deal harshly with the weak and the poor. It is an obligation on us to comfort those dependent on us, to love our enemies, to do all, that is possible for the amelioration and betterment of humanity and for the emancipation of our fellow-creatures from the sufferings which circumstances have placed upon them. We have no right to monopolize loaves and fishes for ourselves and to secure all that is conducive to our exclusive worldly aggrandizement. We are born for others: they are our 'constructive trust; and as human beings it is our duty to do good to them. We are all, as Sa'dī says, the inseparable members of one body and as such must be pleased with the happiness of others and grieved with the pain of the poor. It follows, therefore, that the mitigation of the

moral, physical and spiritual sufferings of others by our exertions, stripped of all vanity and prejudice, is bound to lead us to the gratification of our individual and collective happiness in spirit. And in our spiritual happiness and ascendancy lies our real and moral victory.

بکشائے درے کہ در کشاينده توئی

بنمائے رہے کہ رہ نماينده توئی *

من دست به هیچ دستگیرے نہ دهم

کایشان همه فانی اند و پاينده توئی *

Open me an outlet for it is Thou who canst open
the door,

Show me a way for it is Tiou who canst show
the way ;

I will never implore any supporter for help,
For they are all mortals and eternal art Thou only.

There is perhaps no creed or denomination which, in the midst of brewing storms, does not crave its friends for help. But our cosmopolitan poet, in the rhapsody of his passionate feelings towards his creator, strikes a magic note of self-help from the depth of his heart to outwit those who feel little inclination to step out of the limits allowed them by their sectarian principles. The poet at first seems to be over-awed by the stormy situation of his environments, and when despair and disappointment

show their face, he casts himself deep in the meditation of the Deity. Then all of a sudden, he gathers strength and emerges forth like a gay, dashing and gallant warrior with indomitable courage, he tosses his thoughts with a marvellously beautiful skill and turns them into words of fascinating melody that go directly to the heart.

Khayyam's quatrains are not only a song for the afflicted in the hour of misery and despondency but in them shines forth that wholesome and undeniable truth, which gives courage to the care-ridden. They serve as a soothing, matchless and efficacious embrocation to the broken heart in the hour of trial. In an isolated state they stifle all the heavy sorrows with exemplary calm and patience.

The whole world has turned against our poet for he is bent upon speaking the sparkling universal truths. He is prosecuted and no stone is left unturned to cause him the most painful mental anguish, and in that hour when no one comes forward to befriend him, he invokes the mercy and compassion of the Deity for help, the Eternal God who administers the whole world with His divine sceptre, and before whom the most powerful emperors of this mortal and transitory world bend their heads in willing supplication. And it is thus that the poet leaves to suffering posterity a song, a prayer of more unrivalled sweetness that has ever

found place in a poet's tormented mind and afflicted heart.

When hearts made soft by love
Shall turn again to prayer,
There comes a heavenly solace
To those in dark despair.

(Muborka Alice Welch).

Tamám Shud.

APPENDIX

THE ORIGIN OF YEAR AND ERA IN NATIONS

ALL the nations in the world recognize the fact that a week consists of seven and a month of thirty days and that a year contains twelve months. In Tibet, however, a week consists of five days only. This division of time is not a modern attempt. It comes down to us from time immemorial. The origin of this seems to be this. First of all man must have noticed that the sun rises with all his dazzling, majestic and glorious splendour every morning, and gradually descending towards the west, sets in the evening. His golden rays brighten the whole universe all the day long and, with the turning of his luminous face, night makes its appearance from the chaos of darkness.

The second spectacle that must have attracted the attention of the inquisitive man may have been the regular return of the bright moon to her original condition, after having completed her different phases in twenty-nine or thirty days. When observation and experience convinced him of her regular and recurring motions, he divided her performances into spaces of time and termed them days and months, the twelve motions of the moon being called lunar months. Man naturally had already become accustomed to the attraction of planets. He gradually selected from the surface

of the spacious firmament on high, seven of the most resplendent bodies, which, owing to their movements, were by the lack of his common sense, regarded as the luminaries of the Deity and eventually worshipped by him. They were considered to be the authors of his destiny, and each day was allotted a separate name in order that the foolish man might bend his head before them in willing obedience. This is the origin of a week and its seven days. This is the reason why the world called the seven days of a week after the names of these different planets and used the lunar month so extensively. The wisdom and experience of man helped him to divide the number of days, months and years; but, later on, when he noticed that, although every year was numbered by the movements of the moon, still after a period of every thirty or thirty-two years, each season departed from its supposed time, he realized his mistake, caused by the lunar system, and thought that the revolving of the sun or earth also affected our days and nights. It was thus that changes of seasons were recognized and, after years and years of continued experiments, tests and observations, the so-called yearly movements of the sun and the moon were summed up as follows :—

A solar year equals 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 49 seconds and 62 Bepals. (One Bepal is equivalent to $\frac{1}{60}$ th part of a second).

These fractions are equivalent to almost one-fourth of a day and night.

A lunar year is about $11\frac{1}{2}$ days shorter than a solar year.

It is a well-known fact that the Babylonians were the earliest people to invent the division of time. Man's needs must have caused him to bring about a reconciliation between the two forms of years in harmony with the four seasons. There was no other alternative but to make up the deficiency of the lunar year. The Persians were, therefore, led to add eleven days to a lunar year and transform it into a solar year of 365 days. They, however, omitted the fractions, and this is the main cause of the great divergence between the dates and years of the different nations and communities of the world.

Before dealing with the Persian era, we must try to find out the origin and date of any special era and the causes which necessitated the system of calculation. Perhaps the obvious cause of it is this. When the needs of man made great strides, and the orbit of society gradually wound up its chrysalis, he thought it necessary to keep a record.

Bakhte Nasr was emperor of Mesopotamia and Babylon. He introduced his era on his accession to the throne. The system of the era owes its origin to the ancient Egyptians, but its solar basis was so accurate as to be approved of by Doctors like the Greek philosopher Aristotle and the famous Alexandrian Ptolemy.

Filips (Phillip) was the king of Macedonia and father of Alexander the great. His era was enforced 311 years before Christ and was current for years and years in the Mediterranean Archipelago. Alexander's era dates from his death, and was confined to Greece.

only. It was enforced 323 years before Christ, and was in vogue in the time of Muḥammadan¹ rule also. This also was founded on the solar system.

Augustus introduced his era after the conquest of Andalusia (Spain). It was in vogue during the rule of the Muḥammadans. This also was a solar year.

Assyrius was king of Egypt. The Egyptians had been following the solar year from time immemorial. Assyrius introduced a year of 365 days.

Bikramajit or Vikramaditya was the Raja of Ujjain. His era begins from his accession to the throne. It is prevalent even to-day in the Northern India. It was introduced fifty-six years before Christ. According to Indian astronomy, a solar year is constituted of 365 days, six hours, twelve minutes and thirty seconds.

Salewahan was a Raja who introduced his own era, which is still in force in Southern India. "It came into vogue seventy-eight years after Christ.

There are numerous other eras which we have purposely omitted to mention here.¹

*The Persian Era.*² History proves that the Persian era is the most ancient of all the other eras in the world. It underwent several revolutions from the time of Keo-Murth up to the rule of Jamshíd and from Jamshíd up to Yazde-Jurd. It would be out of place to discuss these

¹ For further particulars *vide* Nuzhatu'l-Qulúb Hamadu'lláh Mustaufí and Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. 12, p. 987 *et seq.*

² For reference see Shawáhidu'n-nafisa fi Ithbátu'l-Kabisa by Hájí Muḥammad Husain of Iṣfahán and published (Bombay ed.) A.D. 1827.

charges later, I will therefore like to begin the subject from the reign of Yafse-Jurd.

As the old Persian era had vanished in the rule of Yafse-Jurd, the new era was therefore called after the latter's name as Yafse-Jursh. A Persian historian attributes its origin to Kers Mursh. Another historian says that its founder was Jamshid Peshdadi. I say, and both these statements are trustworthy, because it was Kers Mursh who laid the foundation of the preliminary principles and Jamshid made amendments and improvements thereon and imputed a finishing touch to it. The Yafse-Jursh era was technically a solar year. In other words, the era was considered to traverse the path of the Zohar in 365 days. It appears that before Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) was acknowledged to be a prophet, the same period of 365 days was recognized for the sun to revolve round the Zohar, and this principle was based on the tradition of Zindagi that God created the world in 365 days. The division of the 6 days is rendered by the Persians was thus. The first eleven months were allotted thirty days each and the twelfth was given thirty five days. This division of time corresponded with the old Egyptian system of calculation. The following are the names of the Persian months —

1. Farvardin (corresponding generally with April, but beginning on the 21st of March)
2. Urdi Bahisht (May)
3. Khordad (June)
4. Tir (July)
5. Mordad (August)
6. Shahrivar (September)
7. Mehr (October)
8. Aban (November)
9. Azar (December)
10. Dair (January)
11. Bahman (February)
12. Esfandگرد (March)

The era of Yazde-Jurd, the last of the Sassanian kings, dates from the first year of his reign (632 A.C.)

As the twelfth month consisted of thirty-five days, the technical name of the five additional days in astronomy was Khamsa-í-Mustareqa or Lawáhiq. The are :—

1. Ahnúd. 2. Ashnúd. 3. Isfandand. 4. Dhisht. 5. Hashtawís.

The Lawáhiq were, for the first time, introduced in the reign of Jamshíd. The addition of these five days resulted in the reduction of about one-fourth of a day and night every year, and which, in the fourth or leap year, amounted to one whole day and night. To make up this deficiency, they added one whole month of Kabísa after every 120th year. Thus this year contained thirteen months. The month preceding the month of Kabísa, was also called Kabísa. The Persian months had no weeks, but instead each day of the month had a separate name given to it as detailed below :—

1. Armuzd. 2. Bahman. 3. Úrdi Bahist. 4. Shahr-Your. 5. Isfandarand. 6. Khurdád. 7. Murdád. 8. Díebazar. 9. Ázur. 10. Ában. 11. Khúr. 12. Máh. 13. Tír. 14. Kúsh. 15. Daimehr. 16. Mehr. 17. Sarosh. 18. Rashn. 19. Farwardín. 20. Bahrám. 21. Rám. 22. Bayád. 23. Dai. 24. Dín. 25. Árd. 26. Ashtád. 27. Ásmán. 28. Zamyád. 29. Már. 30. Isfandáyazán.

Among these names Armuzd and Dai are the names of the Almighty God. The others are the sacred names of the attendant angels. They include nine such dates which are also the names of Persian months, for

instance, Urdi Bahist, Khurdid, etc. These nine days, in conformity with the mandates of Zardisht, were regarded as the days of pleasure and rejoicing. Therefore this Kabisa month included the nine days of festival. They were not merely intended for rejoicings and revelry, for the religious injunctions enjoined on its followers to pass this sanctimonious time in devotion to God and holy services. But every person, high or low, managed to seek refuge in merriments and a variety of pleasures, inasmuch as that liberal arrangements were made on behalf of the Government to leave no opportunity unused for the unmarried gratification of the people. The Imperial table was tastefully decorated daily with numerous kinds of delicacies. The Emperor held his Darbar in new costumes. According to the adopted principle the first Kabisa happened in the month of Farwardin and the second in Urdi Bahist. Eventually, the Kabisa ended in the month of Isfandar covering a period of 1,440 years.

When Jamshid Peshdadi ascended the throne, the period of 1,440 years had elapsed. So Jamshid ordered rejoicings to be made on a great scale, in commemoration of this grand event and also of his 400 years' brilliant rule. These rejoicings took place in the month of Farwardin, when the sun was passing through Aries. There is not a single instance in the history of Persia to equal this grand festival in expense, amusement and brilliance.¹ After Jamshid it was agreed upon that

¹ See Humdu'llah Mustawfi *Kuzhatu'l Qulub* (Bombay ed.) A II 1311, pp. 48-9.

general rejoicings should be held on the first of every month of Farwardín. The Persian historians call it Naurúz-í-Akbarí. It is still enjoyed throughout the length and breadth of Persia. From a climatic point of view, this is the best part of the year, when the winter departs and ushers in the sweet tidings of the arrival of spring.

Yazde-Jurd, the last of this name, son of Shahr-yar, introduced his own era from the time of his accession to the throne. As the coronation took place on the date when the moon made its appearance in Fárwardín, and as a new year of the era was introduced, therefore the eighth Kabísá, which was to end in Aban, was not observed. Unfortunately, the Emperor was assassinated on Thursday, in the month of Jamádí'u'th-Thání in A.H. 31 (A.D. January 19, 652) at Merv (Sháhjihán), and his heir was deprived of his throne. The Persians, taking advantage of this episode, reverted to the old Persian era, preserving the month of Aban in which the Kabísá had to end. This Aban consisted of the additional five days known as Khamsa-í-Mustareqah, so, the astronomers prepared their calendar from Aban. Otherwise, the additional five days were generally reckoned from Isfandar. The old Yazde-Jurdi era was thus re-inforced and is current to this day. The long distance of time dimmed the importance of the Kabísá, that used to take place after every 120 years, finally eradicating its existence. It was, however, substituted by the additional five days. It is obvious that these five days could not be tantamount to 120 years and the real deficiency could not be made up, the result was

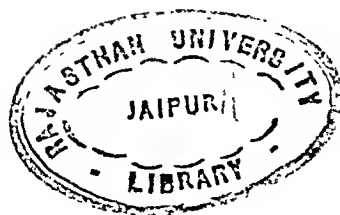
that Naurúz (the Parsee New Year's day) went wide of its mark and could not correspond with the advent of summer.

NOTES —Yazde-Jurd, son of Shahr yar, ascended the throne on Tuesday on the day of the first moon. The first Yazde-Jurd year began on the 22nd of Rabî'u'l Awwal, eleventh Hijra (A D 632). According to the belief of the then astrologers two evil omens took place —

1. The day of his accession to the throne was Tuesday, which like Saturday is regarded by astrologers as an evil day.

2. Yazde Jurd the last, repealed the old system of Kabisa, which was introduced to preserve the days of divine worship otherwise it was quite feasible to add one day in a leap year instead of having recourse to 120 years' calculation. If this last king had ascended the throne in the month of Azar, instead of Farwardin, the Kabisa of 960 years would have been completed. The Kabisa formed an integral factor of Zoraster's religion and it was established by him from a religious point of view. Vide *Shawdhidu'n-Nafisa* (Bombay ed.) 1827 on astronomy.

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